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OCTOBER ISSUE #312

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02621
Laurana, Sorceress
Painted by Liliana Troy

07705
CAV Journal of Recognition 2

07002 Dictator
Painted by Michael Genet

02632
Jahenna, Vampire Seductress
Painted by Jennifer Haley

07700
CAV Tabletop Rules

CAV

WARLORD
COME GET SOME!

14018
Arnise, Half-Elf Berserker
Painted by Anne Foerster

14055
Marcus Gideon
Painted by Anne Foerster

10016
Deathsleet
Painted by
Tim Collier

DEATHSLEET

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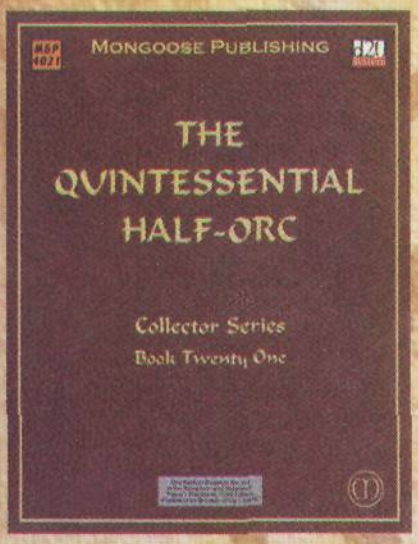
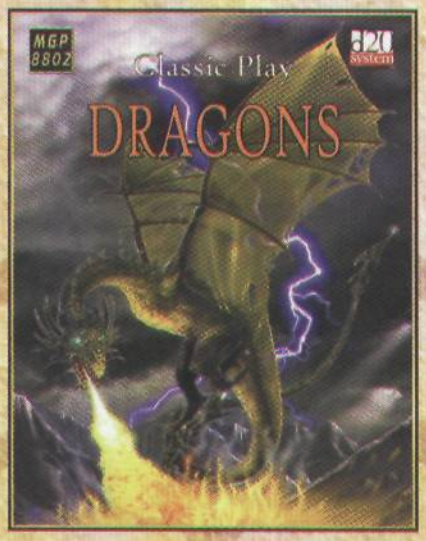
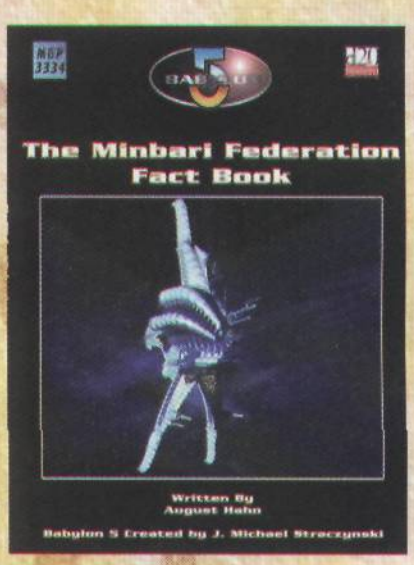


The essential guide for any half-orc, the information contained within will allow one of these characters to truly shine and stand out.



The ultimate source for Dragons, this massive hardback will finally enable Games Masters to get the most out of the king of fantasy monsters.



The latest installment to the Babylon 5 series sees that most enigmatic of races, the Minbari, fully detailed in all their frightening glory.

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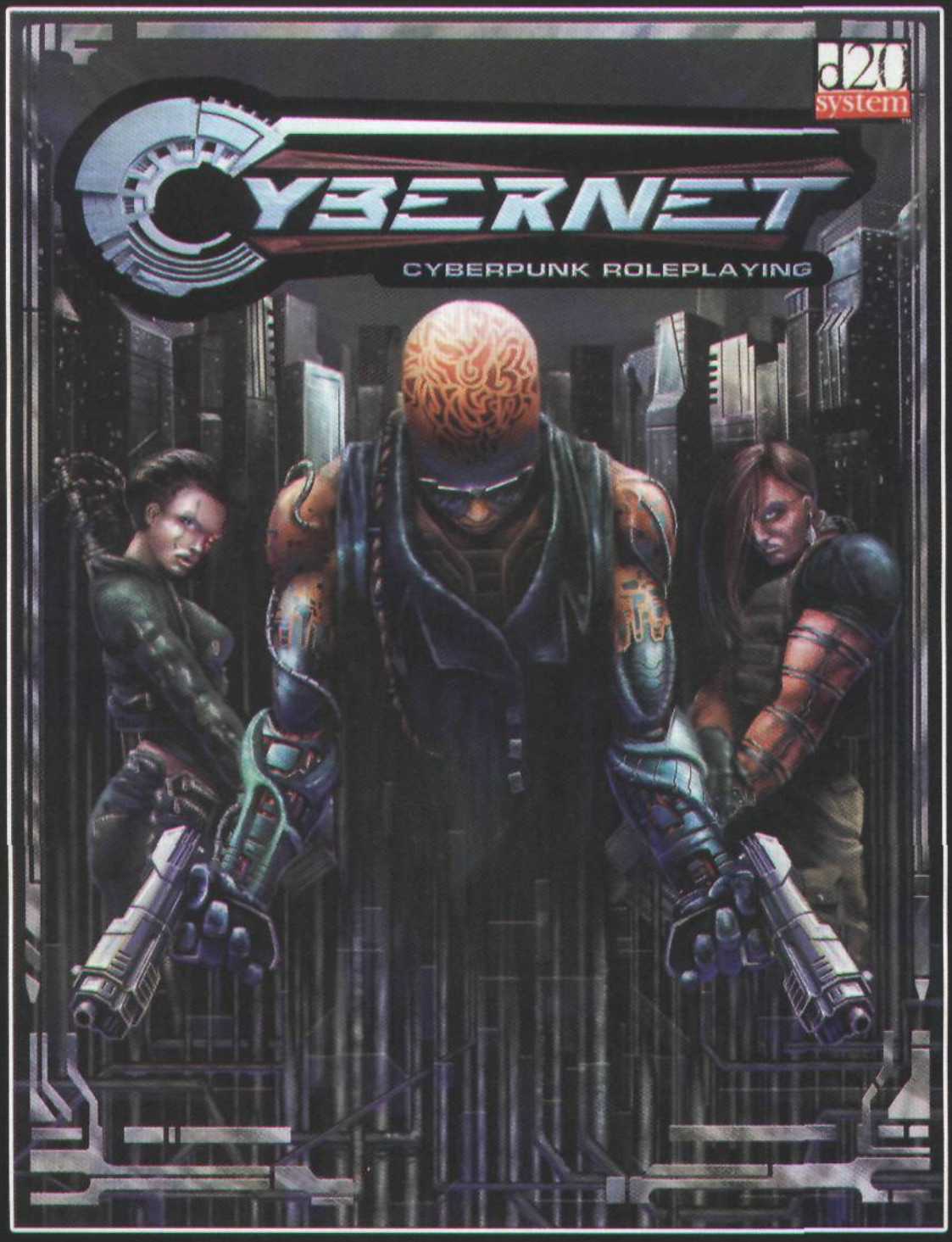

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Available October 2003

MY CHEST HURTS

Alien re-releases in theaters on Halloween this month. One of the greatest alien and adventure flicks of all time, even 25 years later it could contend for best film this year. If you're, ahem, distinguished enough to have seen *Alien* in the theater the first time around, be sure to try to introduce it to a member of the next generation. If you've never seen this movie on the big screen, you can't afford to miss it.

MMM . . . MINIATURES

The D&D miniatures hit the shelves in September. The *Harbinger* set will be produced for a limited time, so to help you (and us) in the collecting frenzy, Wizards of the Coast was kind enough to insert a collector's poster that shows every miniature from the first set. Chris wants at least two trolls because Matt told him that if he wants to play a troll character, he has to paint pants on his miniature.

GOT MAD ART SKILLZ?

We're looking for new talent to produce fantasy artwork. You must be able to work digitally or provide a final RGB 300 dpi digital image. Ability to be flexible and meet tight deadlines is an absolute must.

To submit your work, place four of your best pieces onto one 8.5 in. x 11 in. image area that must also include your name, phone number, and email address. The jpeg image should be no higher than 72 dpi. Email your submission to: **dmart@paizo.com**

GOTTA COLLECT THEM ALL

This issue caps the Special Update Series. If you missed issue #311, you can order the backissue at **www.paizo.com**. If you missed issue #310, you'll have to check your local hobby retailers; we've sold out. You can order the 3.5 DM screen separately from issue #310; we have extras. Don't forget that if you subscribe online, you save an extra dollar.

OOPS!

In issue #311, the article "Arcane Alterations" was designated Open Game Content. Unfortunately, we didn't include a proper section 15 of the OGL, which would have indicated that Malhavoc Press and *Arcana Unearthed* are ©2003 Malhavoc Press. Our sincere apologies to Malhavoc and anyone else confused by the error. Malhavoc Press and *Arcana Unearthed* are not Open Game Content.

WYRM'S **TURN**

FROM THE EDITOR
GOOD TO BE BAD

It's no coincidence that the theme of my first issue as *DRAGON* editor-in-chief is Evil Classes. Now that my coup is successful, my terrible reign can begin! My iron fist will crush . . . um . . . my enemies. All will suffer my wrath and stuff. I mean, my armies of invincible guys will crush your guys, and, uh, you'll cry.

Crap. Okay, so I don't play an evil overlord in real life. Unlike Matt Sernett, who secretly harbors dreams of ruling the world, my heart just isn't in it. But I know a cool bad guy when I see one.

Before I get into that, though, allow me to jump off topic. In case you missed Jesse's farewell last issue, here's the scoop. My name is Chris, and I'll be your editor for this flight (and many more to come, hopefully). I was traded to *DRAGON* from *DUNGEON* at the deadline for two minor league prospects to be named, and Jesse has moved off to Wizards of the Coast R&D to begin his career as an official DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designer. I'm super excited to be here, but I don't want to talk about me. I want to talk about villains.

Back to the point.

While I might not be chockfull of badness myself, I can appreciate a good villain. Heck, who doesn't? Whether it's Michael Corleone in *The Godfather,* Cardinal Richlieu in *The Three Musketeers,* Iago in *Othello,* or my personal favorite, Thulsa Doom in *Conan* (he turns into a snake!), villains make entertainment memorable. D&D should be no exception.

As players, we remember the fights where we finally killed Lord Voldesauron, the evil necromancer bent on turning a kingdom into a bastion of the undead. As DMs, we spend countless hours brainstorming the perfect villains, planning the ideal moment to spring them on our unsuspecting players.

Villains from existing sources can certainly provide a great deal of inspiration for D&D foes. Whether you borrow a look, an agenda, or a unique speech pattern, there are loads of villains ripe for the picking. At the same time, overusing this angle can make your bad guys predictable and uninteresting. If your characters only ever face bad guys based on *Batman* villains ("Everybody, chill"), pretty soon you're not borrowing, you're boring.

That's why I think it's important to spin your villains a bit. If some aspect of your villain reminds the players of a favored baddie, you can play on the feelings he originally invoked in them. And by twisting him up just a bit, maybe adding a fresh coat of varnish, you can still create something new and memorable in its own right. That's what this issue is really all about: Taking a classic D&D villainous icon, swapping out some bits, and giving you a new way to spin an old favorite. For you players out there, the bulk of this issue can be useful to you as well, if for no other reason than to familiarize yourself with a new breed of bad guy.

So who are your favorite villains, and why? Have you ever based a campaign villain on a bad guy from pop culture? Alternatively, as a player, have you ever fought a villain you just knew was based on someone from TV, a movie, or literature? Did "recognizing" the bad guy enhance the moment or ruin it? And finally, let us know how your experiences with some of the villains in this issue go. Send us a quick email describing a favorite (or least favorite) villain to **scalemail@paizo.com**.

Chris

Editor-in-Chief

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A fantasy for wherever reality takes you.

Welcome to the fantasy world of Ivalice. Use swords, magic, spells or whatever tactics you can to return to reality. Itill take strategy and time. Good thing you can take it with you.

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Alcohol Reference
Mild Violence

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#313 RACES OF POWER

Eyes That Kill
By Michael Mearls
Already tremendously powerful creatures, the haughty beholders continually seek an edge over the lesser races, as well as each other. New equipment, feats, and prestige classes for beholder-kind will keep your floating menaces above their peers.

Mind Benders
By Clifford Horowitz
Self-styled rulers of the Underdark, mind flayers continually develop new abilities to conquer the minds and enslave the wills of any that cross them. New psionic powers and feats in this article are compatible with the Revised 3.5 *Psionics Handbook* releasing in 2004.

Moonlight Hunters
By Dean Poisso
Playing lycanthropes has been unbalancing in the past, but now you can play your favorite shapechanger with these monster level advancement rules. You'll also learn all about what makes lycanthropes tick, and gain access to new lycanthropic feats.

Half Dead
By Trent Troop
Through freak accident or bizarre magical experiment, the half undead were created. With this template, you can create creatures that straddle the line between the living and dead. You'll also find several sample half-undead creatures to add a new element of horror to your campaign.

Plus "Dungeoncraft," "Sage Advice," "Nodwick," and a special announcement of a new feature coming to *Dragon* in 2004!

SCALE **MAIL**

READERS TALK BACK
COMICS, ART, AND CRIMINALS

Get Your Game On

Hey, I've been trying to find an online game of D&D for months now and have not had the slightest bit of luck. The problem is I can't DM, I've never done it, and need more experience playing before I feel I could do a good job of it. I have AOL, which I feel provides an excellent environment for roleplaying, with their chat-rooms and dice rolling, but I still cannot seem to find anything. Do you guys have any suggestions on how to find an online game, or knowledge of a forum that has others like me? Thanks a lot for the help, and I love the magazine. Keep up the good work. No matter what anyone says, I like how you cover the upcoming releases prominently in the issues that come out near their release. If I had one suggestion, it would be to put in less of the actual material that comes in the book, and focus more on additional material that pertains to those books. Anyhow, thanks.

Brad Blanchard
Address withheld

Our psychics must be sleeping on the job. We try to get readers what they want before they know they want it, but your email caught us in the production cycle for #312. I hope "The Play's the Thing" in this issue proves helpful.

This issue also features an article that supports a new Wizards of the Coast release. The article presents new supplemental material that doesn't require you to have the Book of Exalted Deeds, *and the article is off-theme with the rest of the issue. We hope this provides both readers like you and readers less interested about current releases with great game material they can use. Let us know what you think by sending an email to scalemail@paizo.com.*

Matthew Sernett
Senior Editor

Fad Art?

I have never taken the time to write *Dragon*, although I started reading Dragon with issue #67. I wanted to applaud you for the excellent artwork in *Dragon* #310, including the beautiful cover art by Elmore. I was further surprised by many other excellent pieces of artwork that headed up each of the main articles in the magazine. I am hopeful that this return to more classical fantasy art is not a passing fad, but rather a change heralding the coming of 3.5. The artwork in your magazine associated with 3.0 was more of fantasy superhero art rather than capturing the true feel of the game. Obviously, much of the credit can be attributed to Elmore who has done so many wonderful pieces throughout the years. I certainly hope he will continue to contribute to the magazine, and I further thank you for including the full-page, complete image of his work in the back of the magazine. It is nice to see the artist's complete vision!

Trevor Gunn
Chandler, AZ

Letter to the New Editor

Hi Chris. Welcome to *Dragon*. I hope you bring as many creative ideas to *Dragon* as you did to *Dungeon*. Over the years, as I have read *Dragon*, I have seen the good, the bad, and the ugly, but I am always happy to see the publishers of *Dragon* try new things—even if they backfire sometimes. That proves to me that the staff is always looking to improve, and because of that I can forgive the occasional slip up. So keep it up, and keep the surprises coming.

Now for the selfish request: I would love to see the return of a good comic series that tells a serious story with exceptional artwork. (I hate to use the word comic because most people think of goofy or silly artwork.) One of my newest discoveries in the graphic novel industry is *Crossgen* (**www.crossgen.com**). They are really

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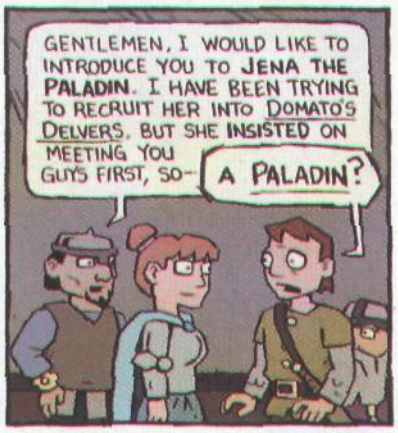
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 3.5

PLAY MORE

ZOGONIA


GENTLEMEN, I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO JENA THE PALADIN. I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO RECRUIT HER INTO DOMATO'S DELVERS. BUT SHE INSISTED ON MEETING YOU GUYS FIRST, SO-
A PALADIN?

DOMATO, ARE YOU INSANE?! PALADINS MAKE HORRIBLE ADVENTURERS! THEY ALWAYS KILL EVERY MONSTER YOU WANT TO NEGOTIATE WITH, AND THEY ALWAYS TAKE PRISONER EVERY CREEP YOU WANT TO KILL!!

BY TONY MOSELEY

pushing the graphic novel genre and are putting out a series of interrelated products that cover several genres (techno, psionics, sword and sorcery, and they even have epic-level characters in their stories), which seems to lend itself to the d20 system perfectly. If you don't mind me visualizing this, I could see each issue of *DRAGON* moving the story along, featuring different events across the multiverse and how that affects the various realities. Then you could have a tie-in with *DUNGEON* detailing the various realities. Your sales department could approach various publishers who have products that are similar in nature to that month's story and include those publishers products in a listing at the end of the story to help DMs gather the necessary resources to create a similar world. The website could host sneak peeks of these products (in PDF format) that only include a bit of teaser info.

Warren LaFrance
Address withheld

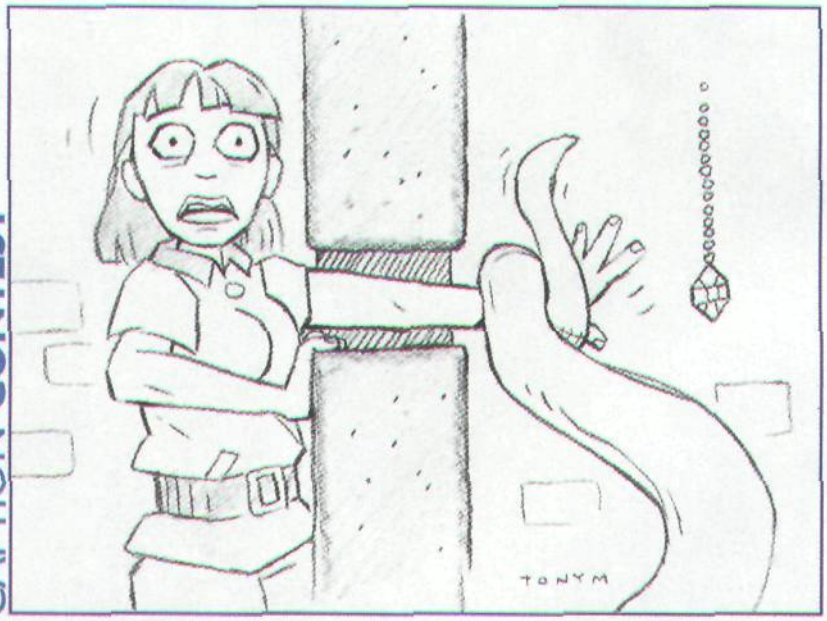
Thanks for the kudos. We'd love to do all the things you suggest. Unfortunately those things take time, money, and lawyers. With the resources currently at our disposal, it's just not feasible to bring Crossgen *comics into the magazine. On the other hand, we are always on the lookout for great original comics to put in* DRAGON. *Jason Engle, a regular contributing artist to* DRAGON *who did the art for "Assassin" in this issue, recently presented us with a comic that looks pretty interesting. Check it out at* ***www.talismanstudios.com/Relic.htm*** *and let us know what you think.*

Matthew Sernett

Rogue Gamers

I was actually sad to receive my *DRAGON* in the mail this month because I was reminded that the rest of my collection that was stolen. I carried all of my gaming gear in a computer-type bookbag. My books, character sheets, dice, sketches of characters, precious *DRAGON* magazines—even my favorite pencil—all are lost to the wilds. I left the bag in the back of my boyfriend's car, and a thief, probably thinking it was a computer because it was so heavy, snagged it along with my boyfriend's gaming bag (containing similar gear) and the car stereo. Now I have to start collecting all over again, and I have to try to remember what was on the character sheets. I want to send out a

CAPTION CONTEST



What's so funny? Why, you are! So send your caption for this cartoon to **Caption/DRAGON Magazine, 3245 146th PL SE Suite 110, Bellevue, WA 98007** by November 1st, and be sure to write "issue #312" somewhere on your entry. Your caption will undergo rigorous testing by the editors, and if it passes, it just might be printed in an upcoming issue. There's no need to cut up your magazine. If you want to include the drawing, send in a photocopy.

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PLAY MORE

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DUNGEON #104

The Demonskar Legacy

By Tito Leati

The Shackled City Adventure Path continues! After a riot erupts in the streets of Cauldron, the PCs must track down a missing paladin before the mob tears the city apart. A D&D adventure for 8th-level PCs.

Dragon Hunters

By Peter Zollers

Fort Akor has come under attack by a dragon, but when the PCs seek out the beast in the surrounding jungle they discover the dragon might be the least of the fort's troubles. A D&D adventure for 7th-level PCs.

POLYHEDRON #163

Polyhedron # 163

Take an extensive look at the RPGA Network's new Player Rewards program and find out how you can score points playing *Dungeon* adventures! We present an overview of the burgeoning d20 PDF market, and Gary Holian brings us a plethora of Greyhawk paladins.

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Undefeated #2 goes on sale in the last week of September, 2003. Ask your local retailer for it, or go to **paizo.com/undefeated** to subscribe.

warning to fellow gamers. Beware ye who tote your gear in computer bags, for thieves may not realize they don't hold what they seem.

Amanda
Address withheld

Well, we do get a lot of mail from gamers in prison. . . .

Matthew Sernett

Blind as a Bard

Why is the Spot skill only a class skill for four of the base classes? It's probably the most useful skill in the entire game, and only four of the classes can take it to a level where it will be of any use against an equal-level opponent that's hiding. It's not just mechanics, but also flavor. Why can't the veteran fighter or paladin, survivor of many surprise assaults, notice an ambush laid by rogues of half his level. This doesn't make any sense to me, especially at higher levels. If the rogue, or anyone else with the Hide skill as a class skill, hides and rolls above a 10, the people who do not get Spot as a class skill have little chance of seeing him. This makes for some very unbalancing combats, I can tell you. Perhaps if there were a feat in the core books that you could take to add skills to your class skill list I could understand it, but without that I just don't understand. Perhaps you can explain this to me.

John Kelbaugh
Yokosuka, Japan

Testify! Spot is as fantastic skill and certainly one of the most useful skills to help your character live another day. Yet if you look at the skill lists, only four classes have Hide as a class skill, and three of the classes with Hide as a class skill are also the classes that have Spot as a class skill. That's no coincidence. The characters who are good at laying an ambush also excel at spotting ambushes. A round of surprise attacks by rogues can be devastating, but not much more devastating than a round where rogues manage to flank their foes. If surprise encounters are seriously threatening game balance in your campaign, take a look at how you use the rules for Listen checks. Six classes have Listen as a class skill, and characters might hear their foes before they spot them—perhaps even early enough to shout a warning to warriors slower on the uptake.

Matthew Sernett

CAPTION CONTEST WINNER

WINNER

"Okay, which one of you little monsters wants Grandma to read a bedtime story?"
Gregory Mate
London, Ontario

RUNNER-UP

"There has got to be something in here about getting out bloodstains."
Robert A. Robbins
Tucker, AR

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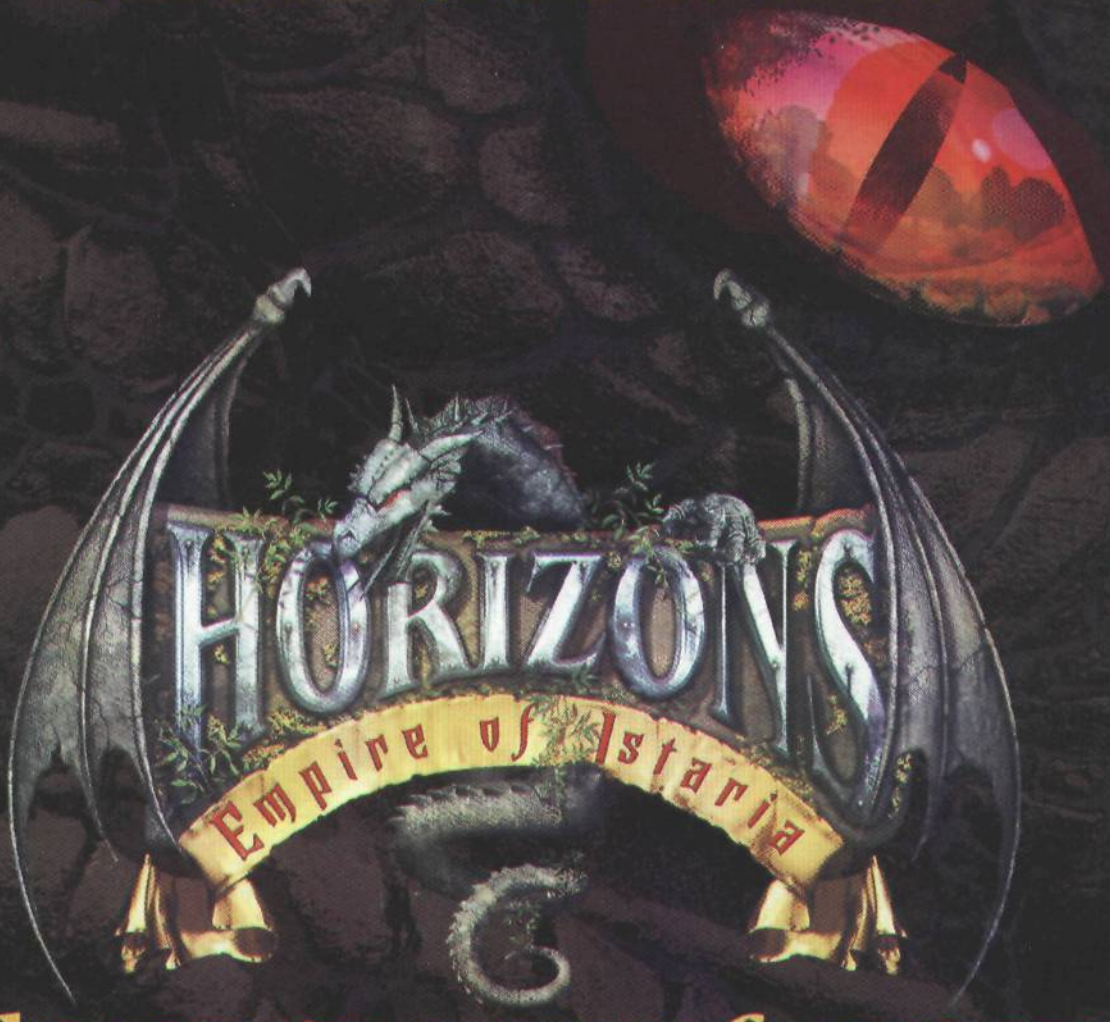

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ATARI

ZOGONIA

WE GNOMES ARE TOUGHER THAN WE LOOK! TEN TIMES TOUGHER! GO AHEAD—KICK ME IN THE STOMACHE! HARD! HARD...AS...YOU...CAN!
THK!
HOLY CRAP.
I KNOW!--LOOK HOW FAR IT WENT!

BY TONY MOSELEY

UP ON A SOAPBOX

THE FIRST ORC HERO
HE'S GOT STARS IN HIS EYES

by Gary Gygax

It didn't take long for the regulars in my GREYHAWK campaign to discover that it was cheaper and easier for them to subdue and conscript orcs into their attack forces than it was to find and hire mercenaries. Tenser, Terik, and Robilar were aggressive and ambitious characters, going so far as to clear a dungeon level, fill it with their own orc warriors, and use that as their adventuring base for dungeon delving. The captured and "converted" orcs usually didn't survive long. Eventually, both Tenser and Terik decided to forego such troops, so among the PCs only Robilar remained in charge of any considerable body of these humanoids.

Here I must make a seeming digression. Rob Kuntz was always ready to play just about any challenging game, and he played to win. In one case he attempted to foist off "quij" as a word when we were playing Scrabble. Of course we called him on it, and thereafter gave Rob a hard time about it whenever the subject of "fudging" in game play came up.

One fine day not long after the Scrabble incident noted above, Rob asked to play D&D, and I was happy to oblige as DM. In the course of exploring a side level of my Greyhawk Castle dungeons, Robilar and his guard of about a half-dozen orcs were surprised in a large room by a party of ogres. In the melee that ensued, the orcs fell rather quickly—all but one, that is. In short order, there were but three ogres left alive, two attacking Robilar, and one squared off against the sole surviving orc from Robilar's force. Armed and armored as he was, the fighter was hard pressed to manage the two big humanoids, and by the time he finally managed to finish off the second ogre, he was very near zero hit points! These ogres were tough, and a lot of high numbers came up when their attack rolls were made, so Rob was sweating the outcome. Had the third of their number managed to join the fray against Robilar, he would have been slain.

As Robilar was exchanging attacks against the pair of ogres, smiting them hip and thigh, his valiant orc faced his ogre adversary alone. If I was rolling well for the pair taking on Robilar, I couldn't avoid rolling poorly when it came to this humanoid's attacks. The ogre hit only once in about 10 rounds of the exchange between it and the orc. The latter, however, hit the ogre about every other time, so as Robilar dropped his last assailant, so did the orc that served him. Even I, as DM, was impressed by the way the dice favored that orc.

"The orc is well above the run-of-the-mill humanoids of his ilk. Defeating an ogre single-handed is most unusual," I said to Rob. "I'll roll 2d6 to see what his new hit point total is."

So I rolled the dice and they came up boxcars. "Twelve points," I exclaimed. "This is an orc hero! You can roll 4d6 for him if you want, or keep the 12 total he now has." Of course, Rob rolled the dice and got a higher total for his new 4th level orc fighter. "By the way," I added as he was noting the hp information, "his name is Quij."

So that was how the first orc hero came into being, and how I made sure that Rob could never live down his fudging in the Scrabble game. It was scant compensation for the affair, because Rob had made a considerable coup. He valued Quij highly, and the orc hero went on many subsequent adventures with his master, serving Robilar well indeed, until they came to the Temple of Elemental Evil. That episode in the history of Quij is a whole different story. . . .

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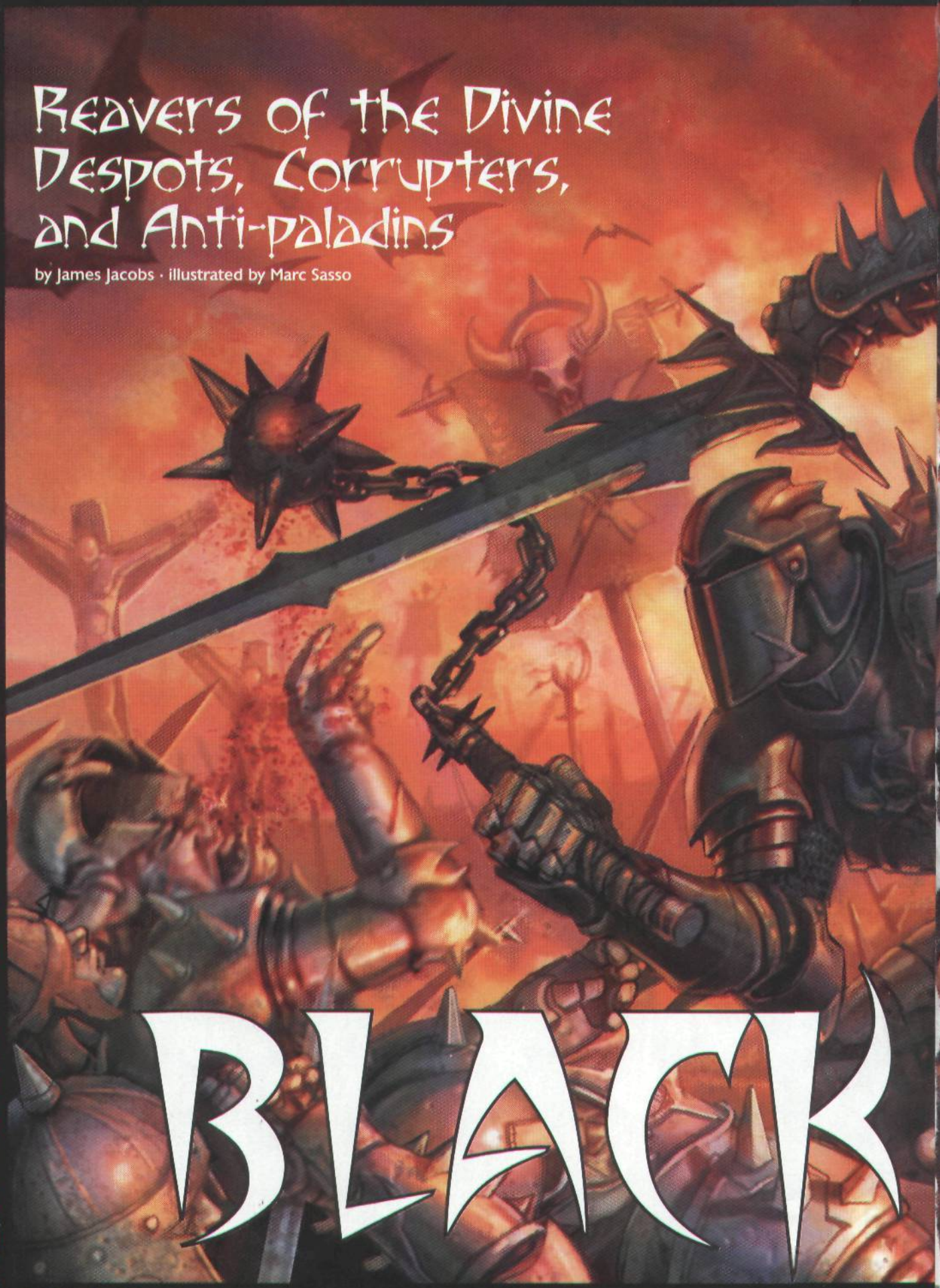
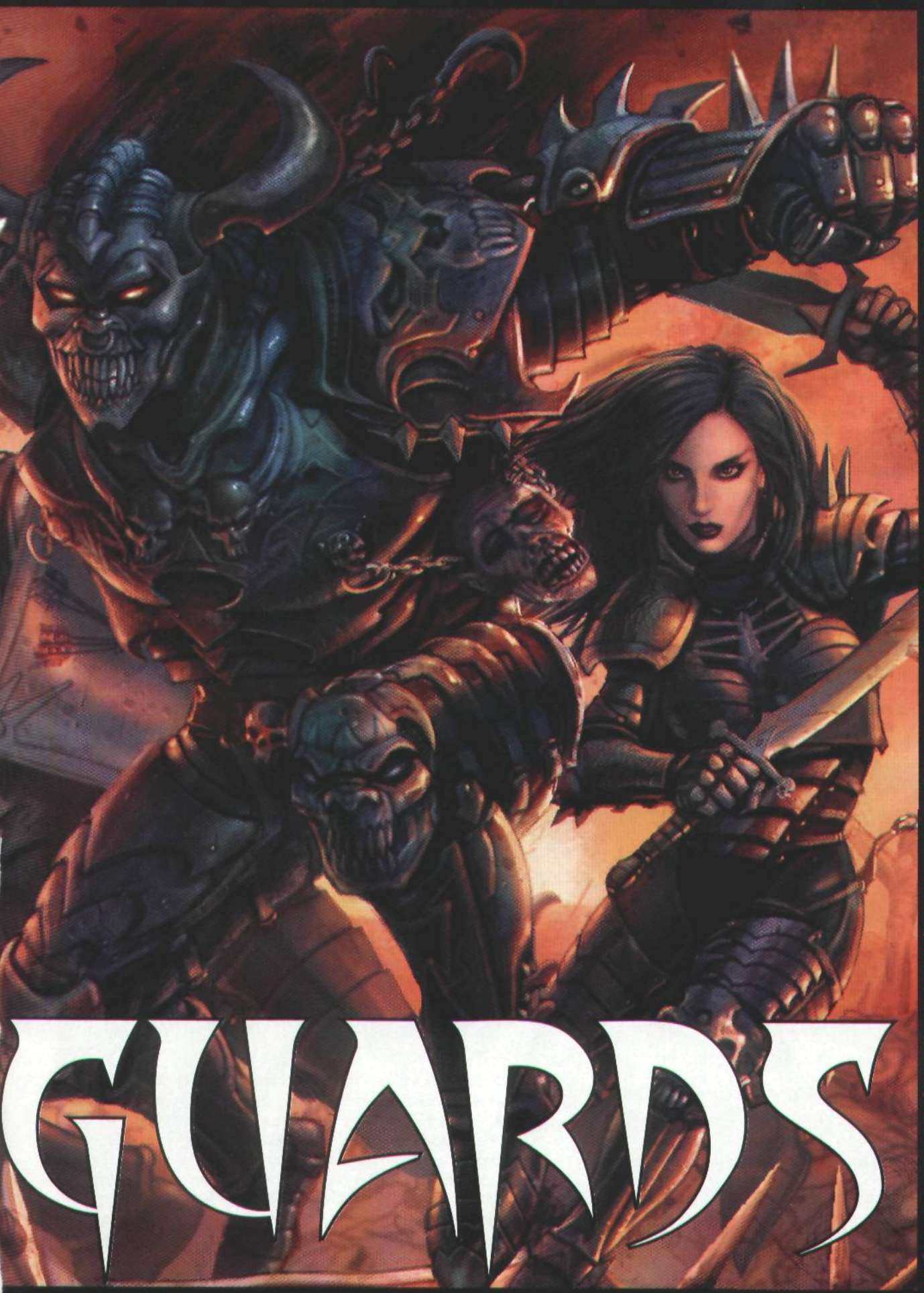
ATARI

Reavers of the Divine
Despots, Corrupters, and Anti-paladins

by James Jacobs · illustrated by Marc Sasso





GUARDS

Blackguards · Blackguards · Blackguards · Blackguards · Blackguards · Blackguards · Blackguards

Holy warriors abound in all societies, serving the call and cause of good and law, or of chaos and balance as their deities and countries require. Of these champions, the paladin is the most common and widely known. Other champions exist as well, embodying other virtues of belief and ethos: the disruptive anarch, the rebellious avenger, the protective sentinel, the mysterious incarnate, and the devoted enforcer. Yet these are not the only holy warriors who have chosen to devote their lives and will to the pursuit of a sacred goal—others lurk in the shadowy places of the world. They wear a multitude of faces in these regions: crimelord, tyrant, warlord, murderer. The antithesis of all virtues, they are champions of sin, the heralds of despair. They are the reavers of the divine.

This article compliments "Champions of the Divine," an article that appeared in issue #310 and detailed five variants of paladins that served alignments other than lawful good. Yet three alignments were conspicuously absent from that article and with good cause. Whereas the champions of the divine often work together with other orders that do not directly oppose their ethos, the reavers of the divine are cruel and bitter to the core, and serve only their own debased needs and desires. Nevertheless, these unholy warriors are fundamentally similar to the paladin in several ways; they are all martial classes and often serve as soldiers and guardians for their chosen religion. Yet each has a specific and unique focus.

SHARED GAME RULES

Despite their different beliefs, all champions of the divine share certain similar abilities and features as detailed below.

Abilities: Charisma enhances an unholy warrior's ability to smite, her self-protective capabilities, and her ability to channel energy. Strength is important for its important role in combat, something that all unholy warriors revel in. A Wisdom score of 14 or higher is required to get access to the most powerful unholy warrior spells, and a score of 11 or higher is required to cast any unholy warrior spells at all.

Alignment: All holy warriors must be of a specific alignment, as indicated on the following table.

Unholy Warrior	Required Alignment
Despot	Lawful Evil
Corrupter	Neutral Evil
Anti-paladin	Chaotic Evil

Hit Die: 1d10

Class Skills: Although all six unholy warrior classes have different skill lists, they all gain skill points at the same rate.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (2 + Int modifier) x4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: All unholy warriors are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with all types of armor (heavy, medium, and light), and with shields (except tower shields).

Smite (Su): All unholy warriors can smite a certain type of enemy a number of times per day. Smiting a target requires a normal melee attack. The unholy warrior adds her Charisma bonus (if any) to her attack roll and deals 1 extra point of damage per unholy warrior level. If the unholy warrior accidentally smites a target that is inappropriate, the smite attack has no effect, but the ability is still used up for that day.

At 5th level, and at every five levels thereafter, the unholy warrior may smite one additional time per day, to a maximum of five times per day at 20th level.

Divine Grace (Su): At 2nd level, the unholy warrior gains a bonus equal to her Charisma bonus (if any) on all saving throws.

Aura of Fear (Su): Beginning at 3rd level, an unholy warrior exudes an almost palpable aura of menace and evil. Each enemy within 10 feet of her suffers a -4 morale penalty on saving throws against fear effects. The unholy warrior herself is deadened to the emotion of fear, and is immune to all fear effects. This ability functions while the unholy warrior is conscious, but not if she is unconscious or dead. An unholy warrior can suppress or activate this aura as a free action.

Spells: All unholy warriors gain the ability to cast divine spells as early as 4th level (if their Wisdom score is high enough to grant bonus 1st level spells). Each unholy warrior has a unique spell list, and members of these classes must choose and prepare their spells in advance. Unholy warriors gain spells at the same rate as paladins.

ANTI-PALADIN

Of the three variants of unholy warrior, the anti-paladin is certainly the most notorious. A loner, he eschews prolonged contact with all forms of society and companionship except on a temporary basis as his desires, needs, and lusts demand. He wanders the fringe of civilization, always seeking justice to upend, happiness to quash, and faith to destroy. Many anti-paladins are truly mad, completely overwhelmed with the burning desire to tear down what others have toiled to create, be it a comfortable home, a loving family, or even a powerful nation.

Anti-paladins must be chaotic evil, since they personify the raw destructive force of entropy and hatred without focus or direction. Evil deities of destruction often count anti-paladins among their devoted, but powerful beings from the lower planes (especially demon lords) also enlist these hateful souls as minions. Anti-paladins do not form knighthoods or similar societies, but they do work as mercenaries. An anti-paladin who finds himself in charge of a contingent of like-minded killers usually grows tired of his "allies" before long and leads them to their doom or kills them himself.

Class Skills

The anti-paladin's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Ride (Dex), and Survival (Wis).

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the anti-paladin

Aura of Evil: The power of an anti-paladin's aura of evil (see the *detect evil* spell) is equal to his anti-paladin level.

***Detect Good* (Sp):** At will, an anti-paladin can *detect good*, as the spell.

Smite Good (Su): An anti-paladin's smite targets creatures of a good alignment.

Slaughter the Weak (Ex): Beginning at 2nd level, an anti-paladin takes a perverse and horrendous glee when facing opponents in battle that are weaker than himself. He gains a +2 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls with melee weapons when he attacks any creature that has fewer Hit Dice than he does.

Dying creatures who have less Hit Dice than the anti-paladin suffer a -2 penalty to save against *death knell* spells cast by the anti-paladin.

***Death Knell* (Sp):** The anti-paladin can cast *death knell*, as the spell, once per day at 3rd level, at a caster level equal to his anti-paladin level. At every five levels thereafter the anti-paladin can cast *death knell* an additional time each day.

Turn or Rebuke Outsider (Su): When an anti-paladin reaches 4th level, he gains the supernatural ability to turn or destroy good outsiders by channeling energy. He can instead rebuke or command evil outsiders with a use of this ability if he chooses. The anti-paladin may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier. The anti-paladin turns or rebukes outsiders as a cleric of three levels lower would turn undead.

***Fiendish Mount* (Sp):** Anti-paladins gain a fiendish mount at 5th level. This ability functions just like the special mount ability of the paladin class except that an anti-paladin's special mount always has the fiendish template, and it remains for 1 hour per anti-paladin level once called.

***Contagion* (Sp):** At 6th level, an anti-paladin gains the ability to cast *contagion*, as the spell, once per week. He may use this ability an additional time each week every additional three levels, to a maximum of 5 times a week at 20th level. Caster level is equal to the anti-paladin's class level.

Code of Conduct: An anti-paladin must be of chaotic evil alignment and loses all class abilities if he ever willingly commits a good act. He must work at all times to undermine the works of civilization and good peoples, and must never offer mercy or grant quarter unless he betrays his word within the next hour. He cannot join an organization, but he can perform services for others as long as the services are for pay and ultimately lead to chaos and devastation.

Associates: An anti-paladin may adventure with any non-good alignment, but remains hateful and distrustful of any "allies." As soon as an ally is no longer useful, the anti-paladin usually kills her (or at the very least, sacrifices her for

THE ANTI-PALADIN

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day 1	2	3	4
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Aura of evil, *detect good*, smite good 1/day	–	–	–	–
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Divine grace, slaughter the weak	–	–	–	–
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Aura of fear, *death knell* 1/day	–	–	–	–
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Turn outsider	0	–	–	–
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	*Fiendish mount*, smite good 2/day	0	–	–	–
6th	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	*Contagion* 1/week	1	–	–	–
7th	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2		1	–	–	–
8th	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2	*Death knell* 2/day	1	0	–	–
9th	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	*Contagion* 2/week	1	0	–	–
10th	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3	Smite good 3/day	1	1	–	–
11th	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+3		1	1	0	–
12th	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+4	*Contagion* 3/week	1	1	1	–
13th	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+4	*Death knell* 3/day	1	1	1	–
14th	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+4		2	1	1	0
15th	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+5	*Contagion* 4/week, smite good 4/day	2	1	1	1
16th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+5		2	2	1	1
17th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+5		2	2	2	1
18th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+6	*Contagion* 5/week, *death knell* 4/day	3	2	2	1
19th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+6		3	3	3	2
20th	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+6	Smite good 5/day	3	3	3	3

NEW SPELLS

These new spells presented below are often used by unholy warriors, either as spells or spell-like abilities. Consider allowing other evil spellcasters access to these spells, particularly blackguards and assassins.

FALLEN SOUL

Necromancy [Evil]
Level: Clr 5
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Non-outsider living, intelligent creature touched
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

This sinister spell imbues the target's soul with a hidden taint of evil potentiality. Additionally, it brands the creature with an invisible mark on the forehead. Any creature with a moderate aura of evil (see the *detect evil* spell) can see this mark. Other creatures can see it if they can see invisible objects. This mark denotes the creature bearing it as someone who bears in his soul a seed of evil that, with proper coaxing and opportunity, could blossom into true depravity and cruelty. When this spell is first cast on a creature, the creature becomes nauseated for 1 minute.

The recipient of this spell must be a living creature with an Intelligence score of at least 3 and cannot be a creature of the good subtype; the tainting of such creatures is beyond the power of this spell.

Once a good or neutral target is affected by this spell, he begins to have strange and increasingly powerful urges to commit evil acts. His dreams grow dark, sinister, and cruel, yet are disturbingly entertaining and soothing. The magic of the spell does not force the victim to make evil acts, but it does encourage such behavior through conditioning. Each time the victim willingly commits an evil act, this spell grants a +4 profane bonus to the character's Strength, Constitution, and Charisma scores; this bonus persists for 1 hour before fading. If the target continues to perform evil acts, his alignment eventually becomes evil as well, at which time the spell no longer grants this bonus.

If the creature subjected to this spell is evil, the *fallen soul* punishes the creature for good acts. If the target ever willingly performs a good act, the spell causes 4 points of permanent Strength, Constitution, and Charisma drain.

Dispel evil, limited wish, miracle, wish, or *break enchantment* can remove the spell, but *remove curse* cannot, and the *fallen soul* cannot be dispelled. *Atonement* spells automatically fail if cast on a creature under the effects of this spell.

PROFANE WEAPON

Transmutation [Evil]
Level: Anti-paladin 1, Corrupter 1, Despot 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Effect: Weapon touched
Duration: 1 min./level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This transmutation makes a weapon strike true against good foes. The weapon is treated as having a +1 enhancement bonus for the purpose of bypassing the damage reduction of good creatures or striking good incorporeal creatures (though the spell doesn't grant an actual enhancement bonus). The weapon also becomes evil, which means it can bypass the damage reduction of certain creatures, particularly good outsiders. (This effect overrides and suppresses any other alignment the weapon might have.) Individual arrows or bolts can be transmuted, but affected projectile weapons (such as bows) don't confer the benefit to the projectiles they shoot.

In addition, all critical hit rolls against good foes are automatically successful, so every threat is a critical hit. This last effect does not apply to any weapon that already has a magical effect related to critical hits, such as a keen weapon or a vorpal sword.

UNHOLY SWORD

Evocation [Evil]
Level: Anti-paladin 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Effect: Melee weapon touched
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell allows you to channel unholy power into your sword, or any other melee weapon you choose. The weapon acts as a *+5 unholy weapon* (+5 enhancement bonus on attack and damage rolls, extra 2d6 damage against good opponents). It also emits a *magic circle against good* effect (as the spell). If the *magic circle* ends, the weapon creates a new one on your turn as a free action. The spell is automatically canceled 1 round after the weapon leaves your hand. You cannot have more than one *unholy sword* at a time.

If this spell is cast on a magic weapon, the powers of the spell supersede any that the weapon normally has, rendering the normal enhancement bonus and powers of the weapon inoperative for the duration of the spell. This spell is not cumulative with *profane weapon* or any other spell that might modify the weapon in any way.

This spell does not work on artifacts.

Note: A masterwork weapon's bonus to attack does not stack with an enhancement bonus to attack.

his own personal gain). He never knowingly associates with good characters, nor will he continue an association with someone who balks at senseless murder or refuses to reward him for his aid. An anti-paladin may only accept henchmen, followers, or cohorts who are chaotic evil. Anti-paladins always suffer the -2 penalty for cruelty when determining their effective Leadership score to recruit a cohort.

Anti-Paladin Spell List

Anti-paladins choose their spells from the following list:

1st Level: *Bane, cause fear, curse water, deathwatch, doom, inflict light wounds, magic weapon, profane weapon*, protection from good, protection from law, ray of enfeeblement, read magic, summon monster I.*

2nd Level: *Bull's strength, darkness, desecrate, shatter, summon monster II, undetectable alignment.*

3rd Level: *Bestow curse, blindness/deafness, deeper darkness, greater magic weapon, heal mount, inflict moderate wounds, magic circle against good, magic circle against law, summon monster III.*

4th Level: *Death ward, dispel good, dispel law, fear, inflict serious wounds, poison, unholy sword*.*

*See the New Spells sidebar.

DESPOT

The despot can be a local thug who demands protection money from struggling businesses, or she can be the tyrannical ruler of an oppressed nation. In both cases, she profits and thrives from the oppression of those under her net of cruelty and domination. Yet for all her inability to empathize with the hurts and distress of those she stands upon for her own personal empowerment, the despot is not without a rigid form of law and warped honor. She and her minions protect those she rules from other forces. Indeed, in a region besieged with armies of goblinoids, rampaging giants, or ravenous hordes of undead, the local inhabitants might find the rule of a despot preferable.

The despot is always lawful evil, and strives to build an organization of thugs and police to enforce her laws and ideals. Deities of tyranny and oppression often have enforcer followers. Although rare, it is not unheard of for enforcers (see *Dragon* #310) to serve despots as police, especially in regions where the despot's rule is less destructive than the threats to her domain. More often, despots are served by lower level despots who strive to serve their master as best they can until they find a chance or method to depose and replace their ruler.

Class Skills

The despot's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), and Sense Motive (Wis).

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the despot.

Aura of Law: The power of a despot's aura of law (see the *detect law* spell) is equal to her despot level.

***Detect Chaos* (Sp):** At will, a despot can use *detect chaos*, as the spell.

Smite Chaos (Su): A despot's smite targets creatures with a chaotic alignment.

Slippery Mind (Ex): The despot has a powerful sense of self and free will, and her mind fights much harder against magical control than most other minds. If a despot is affected by an enchantment spell or effect and fails her saving throw, she can attempt the saving throw again 1 round later to break free of the effect. Failing this second saving throw does not grant the despot further saving throws against the enchantment.

Indomitable Will (Su): At 3rd level, the despot's mind has become an unassailable fortress of ego. She is now completely immune to all spells of the charm subschool.

Oppression (Su): When a despot reaches 4th level, she gains the supernatural ability to oppress other living creatures by speaking to them and channeling negative energy into the power of her voice. This is a language-dependant, mind-affecting ability.

When a despot tries to oppress, she makes a turning check (1d20 + her Charisma modifier) as if she were a cleric of three levels lower turning undead. The result of the check indicates how many targets within 60 feet (who must be able to understand the despot's words) are potentially affected, and the turning damage indicates the total Hit Dice of targets affected. Creatures with chaotic alignments are affected first, and creatures with lawful alignments are affected last. Within the alignment spectrum, closer creatures are affected first.

A target that is oppressed becomes sickened with guilt and depression (-2 penalty on all attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks) for 1 minute.

If the despot has twice as many levels (or more) than any creature that is oppressed, that creature is instead nauseated (can only take a single move action each turn) for 1 minute.

THE DESPOT

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day 1	2	3	4
1st	+1	+0	+0	+2	Aura of law, *detect chaos*, smite chaos 1/day	–	–	–	–
2nd	+2	+0	+0	+3	Divine grace, slippery mind	–	–	–	–
3rd	+3	+1	+1	+3	Aura of fear, indomitable will	–	–	–	–
4th	+4	+1	+1	+4	Oppression	0	–	–	–
5th	+5	+1	+1	+4	Leadership, smite chaos 2/day	0	–	–	–
6th	+6/+1	+2	+2	+5		1	–	–	–
7th	+7/+2	+2	+2	+5	*Mark of justice* 1/week	1	–	–	–
8th	+8/+3	+2	+2	+6		1	0	–	–
9th	+9/+4	+3	+3	+6		1	0	–	–
10th	+10/+5	+3	+3	+7	Smite chaos 3/day	1	1	–	–
11th	+11/+6/+1	+3	+3	+7	*Mark of justice* 2/week	1	1	0	–
12th	+12/+7/+2	+4	+4	+8		1	1	1	–
13th	+13/+8/+3	+4	+4	+8		1	1	1	–
14th	+14/+9/+4	+4	+4	+9		2	1	1	0
15th	+15/+10/+5	+5	+5	+9	*Mark of justice* 3/week, smite chaos 4/day	2	1	1	1
16th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+10		2	2	1	1
17th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10		2	2	2	1
18th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+6	+11		3	2	2	1
19th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	*Mark of justice* 4/week	3	3	3	2
20th	+20/+15/+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Smite chaos 5/day	3	3	3	3

A despot can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier.

Leadership (Ex): Upon reaching 5th level, a despot gains the Leadership feat as a bonus feat. Despots gain a +1 bonus to their Leadership score.

***Mark of Justice* (Sp):** At 7th level, a despot can cast *mark of justice*, as the spell, once per week. She can use this ability one additional time per week for every four levels after 7th, to a maximum of 4 times a week at 19th level.

Code of Conduct: A despot must be of lawful evil alignment and loses all class abilities if she ever willingly commits a chaotic act (such as breaking a vow or contract or betraying an ally). She must at all times work to expand and grow her domain, either by virtue of the Leadership feat or by strong-arming those less fortunate and powerful than herself. She is allowed to abuse her sovereignty in any way she sees fit to further her own personal strength and glory, but she must protect and defend her subjects and allies from harm from other forces. Likewise, she must not overburden her subjects so that they cannot support her.

Associates: A despot adventures only with characters of a non-chaotic alignment and remains suspicious and wary of those who are not lawful. She will never knowingly associate with chaotic characters, nor will she continue an association with someone who consistently offends her moral code. This includes remaining in a group in which she is not equal or superior to the highest-level member. A despot can adventure or associate with those of equal level, although doing so makes her more uncomfortable and irritable than normal. A despot may only accept henchmen, followers, or cohorts who are lawful evil.

Despot Spell List

Despots choose their spells from the following list:

1st Level: *Alarm, bane, bless, curse water, command, cure light wounds, detect poison, divine favor, endure elements, magic weapon, profane weapon*, protection from chaos, protection from good, resistance, virtue.*

2nd Level: *Bull's strength, eagle's splendor, enthrall, fox's cunning, hold person, resist energy, status, zone of truth.*

3rd Level: *Crushing despair, cure moderate wounds, discern lies, helping hand, lesser geas, magic circle against chaos, magic circle against good, prayer, suggestion.*

4th Level: *Break enchantment, charm monster, cure serious wounds, dispel chaos, dispel good, dominate person, geas/quest, greater command, hold monster.*

*See the New Spells sidebar.

CORRUPTER

Of the three unholy warriors presented here, none can match the corrupter in his capacity for evil. The despot serves as a guardian to those he oppresses and abuses, and the anti-paladin is often too self-destructive and capricious to be a long-term menace. Additionally, their goals are often focused on large scales, and as such their evil is blatantly obvious. The corrupter, on the other hand, specializes in smaller scale perversions and cruelties. He may not rule nations or drive his enemies before himself with waves of fear, but the effects of his deeds are arguably more terrifying. The corrupter is a hidden evil, a lurking menace that uses charm, guile, and deception to allow his evil to work like a slow poison in the souls of his victims.

The corrupter's primary focus is to corrupt the faith of others; his favored targets are good clerics. He uses the abilities granted by his deity to infiltrate the churches of other gods, usually in the guise of a mercenary looking to add purpose to his life in the form of newfound faith. Once he has corrupted as many priests as possible, but before he is discovered, he moves on to a new church. Another favorite tactic is to quietly slay the enemy clerics in a settlement so that minions of his own faith can fill the void left by their passing; often, a town readily accepts the arrival of a new band of clerics when the previous ones have mysteriously been slain.

Corrupters are always neutral evil; they ignore the laws of the land as they see fit to work their evil, yet must remain focused and true to their own deities. All evil deities count at least a few corrupters among their faithful, although most worship deities of deception and temptation. A corrupter's faith in his deity is absolute; he sees himself as a personal extension of his patron's will and strives to undo the work of all other faiths. While he does his best to survive in the wake of his anguished victims, he never hesitates to make great personal sacrifices in order to ensure the success of his hateful goals.

Class Skills

The corrupter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Forgery (Int), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), and Sense Motive (Wis).

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the corrupter.

Aura of Evil: The power of a corrupter's aura of evil (see the *detect evil* spell) is equal to his corrupter level.

***Detect Good* (Sp):** At will, a corrupter can *detect good*, as the spell.

Smite Heathen (Su): A corrupter's smite targets all creatures with the ability (including potential ability, such as a paladin or ranger who have yet to progress to a level that allows spellcasting) to cast divine spells, with the exception of worshipers of his own faith.

Hidden Faith (Su): A corrupter's faith in his deity becomes hidden when he reaches 2nd level. He gains a +4 profane bonus to all Bluff, Disguise, and Forgery checks to maintain this deception, and any magical attempt to discern his actual faith fails unless the caster makes a successful level check (DC = the target's corrupter levels + 10).

***Disguise Self* (Sp):** At 3rd level, a corrupter can cast *disguise self*, as the spell. He may use this spell-like ability a number of times per day equal to his Charisma bonus (minimum of once per day), at a caster level equal to his corrupter level.

Intercession (Su): When a corrupter reaches 4th level, he gains the supernatural ability to cut divine spellcasters off from their source of power. To do so, the corrupter makes a turning check as a cleric three levels lower would. The result indicates the highest-level divine spellcaster the corrupter can cut off from her connection to her deity. The

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THE CORRUPTER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day 1	2	3	4
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	Aura of evil, *detect good*, smite heathen 1/day	–	–	–	–
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+0	Divine grace, hidden faith	–	–	–	–
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+1	Aura of fear, *disguise self*	–	–	–	–
4th	+4	+1	+4	+1	Rebuke divine magic	0	–	–	–
5th	+5	+1	+4	+1	Smite heathen 2/day	0	–	–	–
6th	+6/+1	+2	+5	+2	Fiendish familiar	1	–	–	–
7th	+7/+2	+2	+5	+2		1	–	–	–
8th	+8/+3	+2	+6	+2	*Fallen soul* 1/week	1	0	–	–
9th	+9/+4	+3	+6	+3		1	0	–	–
10th	+10/+5	+3	+7	+3	Smite heathen 3/day	1	1	–	–
11th	+11/+6/+1	+3	+7	+3		1	1	0	–
12th	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+4	*Fallen soul* 2/week	1	1	1	–
13th	+13/+8/+3	+4	+8	+4		1	1	1	–
14th	+14/+9/+4	+4	+9	+4		2	1	1	0
15th	+15/+10/+5	+5	+9	+5	Smite heathen 4/day	2	1	1	1
16th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+5	*Fallen soul* 3/week	2	2	1	1
17th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+5		2	2	2	1
18th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+6		3	2	2	1
19th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+11	+6		3	3	3	2
20th	+20/+15/+10/+5	+6	+12	+6	*Fallen soul* 4/week, smite heathen 5/day	3	3	3	3

turning damage result indicates the maximum total Hit Dice of divine spellcasters within 60 feet the ability can affect. The corrupter's intercession affects the closest divine spellcasters it can affect first. Affected divine spellcasters cannot cast divine spells for 1 minute, except if the corrupter has twice as many corrupter levels as the creature has divine spellcaster levels; in this case, the divine spellcaster loses the ability to cast divine spells for 24 hours. If the corrupter attacks an affected divine spellcaster in any way, or the affected spellcaster receives an *atonement* spell, the divine spellcaster is freed from this effect. The corrupter's allies and other creatures can attack the divine spellcaster without breaking the effect. The corrupter may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier.

Fiendish Familiar (Su): At 6th level, a corrupter gains the Improved Familiar feat (*Dungeon Master's Guide* 200) as a bonus feat, even if he normally couldn't qualify for this feat's prerequisites. His new familiar must be an imp or a quasit. It benefits from the rules on page 52 of the *Player's Handbook*. The corrupter's class level counts as the "master class level" for the purposes of determining what benefits the familiar gains.

***Fallen Soul* (Sp):** At 8th level, a corrupter gains the ability to cast *fallen soul*, as the spell (see the New Spells sidebar), once per week. He may use this ability an additional time each week every additional four levels, to a maximum of 4 times a week at 20th level.

Code of Conduct: A corrupter must be neutral evil, and loses all class abilities if he ever willingly commits a good act or an act that exposes his faith to an opposing religion and results in his detriment. He must strive to corrupt and taint all faiths apart from his own, with a special focus on good faiths. He is allowed to make whatever vows or declarations are required in order to maintain this deception, as long as he spends at least an hour each day in private prayer to his deity. He must strive to remain hidden, although the methods by which he undermines other faiths are left to his own discretion.

Associates: A corrupter can adventure with characters of any alignment, but remains suspicious and wary of good-aligned characters. He tolerates the presence of good associates only as long as he is secretly working to convert them to evil. He will not continue an association with someone who consistently offends his moral code by resisting his efforts to convert them. A corrupter may only accept henchmen, followers, or cohorts who are neutral evil.

Corrupter Spell List

Corrupters choose their spells from the following list:

1st Level: *Bane, cause fear, charm person, cure light wounds, curse water, divine favor, doom, endure elements, inflict light wounds, magic weapon, profane weapon*, protection from good, read magic, resistance, sanctuary, undetectable alignment.*

2nd Level: *Cat's grace, calm emotions, desecrate, detect thoughts, eagle's splendor, enthrall, owl's wisdom, silence, tongues.*

3rd Level: *Clairaudience/clairvoyance, cure moderate wounds, dispel magic, glibness, greater magic weapon, inflict moderate wounds, magic circle against good, nondetection, obscure object, scrying.*

4th Level: *Break enchantment, cure serious wounds, dispel good, dominate person, dream, greater command, inflict serious wounds, locate creature, unhallow.*

*See the New Spells sidebar.

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AMONG THE DEAD

NECROMANCER ARCHETYPES AND ABILITIES

The foul necromancer is a classic D&D game villain. Undead monsters have always been popular—skeletons, zombies, vampires, and other monstrosities returned from the grave have maintained their places among the most-used D&D monsters for decades. But if a shambling, malevolent corpse makes a good monster, then the fiend responsible for animating it must make a perfect villain.

This article focuses on spellcasters who work with the dead. It introduces several new character classes collectively known as the dark magi, along with a few new feats to help round out any necromancer's repertoire. In addition, some new domains are offered to help you create clerics with a taste for necromancy.

The new classes presented in this article work just like the eleven core classes in the *Player's Handbook*. Each has a complete 20-level advancement table and features a full range of special abilities. More importantly, each represents a different spin on a necromancer's abilities—from the fleshcrafter's talent for sewing together new life forms to the soul reaper's power to dominate and enslave the spirits of the dead.

THE DARK MAGI

In most cultures, the living honor the dead. But while others grieve for the fallen and honor their memory, the dark magi see them as convenient tools awaiting exploitation.

The dark magi lurk at the edges of society, carrying out their abhorrent work where the prying eyes of others cannot see them. These foul wizards, and those desperate or foolish enough to work with them, must generally cultivate their trade on their own. No arcane academies (at least none that are easily found) offer coursework in such depraved magic. Occasionally a young aspirant to this path can find a mentor, but most study alone. For this reason, numerous specialties have developed that center around the dark acts of animating and controlling the dead.

The following character classes are variants of the wizard. Each focuses on a different aspect of the necromantic arts.

Deathwalker: The path to immortality is long and arduous—so much so that some spellcasters begin walking it the moment they begin their arcane training. The deathwalker uses necromantic magic to kill her body slowly while simultaneously animating it with fell magic, gradually transforming herself into a creature similar to a lich. She eagerly trades life for death, controlling her descent into the grave and embracing the strength of undeath.

Fleshcrafter: While most necromancers gain power by gathering undead servants, the fleshcrafter uses his magic to warp the very spark of life within all creatures. He routinely butchers the dead, robbing them for parts he needs to assemble his foul creations. To the fleshcrafter, other living creatures are nothing more than shambling bags of spare parts awaiting harvest.

Necromancer · Necromancer · Necromancer · Necromancer · Necromancer · Necromancer · Necromancer · Necromancer · Necromancer

Soul Reaper: Perhaps the most feared of all those who practice necromancy, the soul reaper offers her enemies a fate worse than death. Using her magic to warp the boundary between the living and the dead, she reaches through the veil of mortality to drag innocent souls into her service. Those who fall at her hands face an eternity of servitude, as she traps their spirits within magical talismans and turns them into her slaves.

Shared Game Rules

Although each dark magus class practices a different form of magic, they all share the following basic abilities and class features.

Abilities: Intelligence determines the save DC of the dark magus's spells, as well as the maximum spell level he may use. Charisma aids him in his dealings with independent undead creatures, and good scores in Constitution and Dexterity can bolster his poor hit points and AC respectively.

Alignment: Nearly all dark magi are evil. The spells they use and the philosophies they embrace treat life as a disposable commodity. While they value their personal well-being, they see other creatures as nothing more than objects.

Hit Dice: 1d4

Class Skills: Although the three dark magus classes have different class skills, they all gain skill points at the same rate as a wizard.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (2 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Like most arcane spellcasters, a dark magus receives only minimal training with weapons and none with armor. He is proficient with the club, dagger, heavy crossbow, light crossbow, and quarterstaff, but not with any type of armor or shield. Armor of any type interferes with a dark magus's movements, which can cause spells with somatic components to fail.

Spells: A dark magus casts arcane spells, which are drawn from the sorcerer/wizard spell list in the *Player's Handbook*. He must choose and prepare his spells ahead of time, like a wizard. To learn, prepare, or cast a spell, a dark magus must have an Intelligence score equal to at least 10 + the spell level. The Difficulty Class for a saving throw against a dark magus's spell is 10 + the spell level + the dark magus's Intelligence modifier.

Like a wizard, a dark magus can cast only a certain number of arcane spells of each spell level per day. His base daily spell allotment is given on the table for his class (see below). In addition, he receives bonus spells per day if he has a high Intelligence score (see Table 1-1: Ability Modifiers and Bonus Spells in the *Player's Handbook*).

All dark magi function as necromancer specialist wizards for the purpose of spellcasting. They must specialize in necromancy and choose prohibited schools as per the standard rules for specialist wizards.

Spellbooks: A dark magus must record his spells in thick books. Each morning, he pores over these tomes to prepare his spells for use later in the day. The dark magus can prepare *read magic* from memory, but all other spells must appear in his spellbooks before he can prepare them. A dark magus gains all 0-level wizard spells (except for those from prohibited schools) at 1st level. In addition, he gains three 1st-level spells and an additional number equal to his Intelligence bonus. Thereafter, each time the dark magus achieves a new level, he gains two new spells of any level or levels that his new level allows him to cast.

Spell Mastery: Like a wizard, a dark magus may select the Spell Mastery feat.

DEATHWALKER

From the earliest days of her training, the deathwalker works to gain immortality as an undead creature. The first stages of her transformation are simple changes that leave her mostly alive. As her necromantic prowess increases, however, the dark energies she commands slowly kill off her corporeal form, rotting it from the inside out. By the time she reaches 20th level, she has completed her transformation into an undead creature.

The deathwalker invests more time and effort in achieving immortality this way than she would by using other means, but the gradual change allows her to gain control of potent necromantic magic as she undergoes the necessary physical changes. Furthermore, as she grows in power, her capacity to command and control other undead creatures increases. The deathwalker may follow a more arduous road to eternal life than other necromancers, but the end result is immortality plus power—a potent combination indeed.

Deathwalkers crave undeath, and they view necromancy as a useful tool for collecting and commanding utterly obedient undead servants. Many deathwalkers are utterly amoral, seeing living beings in the same light as they do skeletons or zombies. Both categories of beings, living and mindless undead, are little more than tools or objects to be used and manipulated for their own twisted ends. Some deathwalkers are content to remain in their isolated towers and strongholds, but most are too ambitious to rest on their laurels. Their casual disdain for the living leads them to pursue rituals that require the deaths of hundreds of innocents with little concern for the potential repercussions of their actions.

Deathwalker Class Features

All of the following are class features of the deathwalker.

***Master of the Dead* (Sp):** At 1st level, the deathwalker gains the ability to bind certain undead creatures to her service, controlling them as though with *animate dead*. If the deathwalker or any of her allies attack a controlled creature, control is immediately broken for that creature.

Upon confronting a zombie or skeleton, the deathwalker can attempt a Charisma check (DC 15 + the undead's Hit Dice) to command it. She cannot use this method if she or any of her comrades have already attacked the target creature.

A deathwalker can control only as many skeletons and zombies as her level allows, as given on the table below. (Treat undead with less than one Hit Die as 1-HD undead for the purpose of this ability.) If she attempts to gain control of undead in excess of her limit, she must immediately release already controlled zombies and skeletons from her service until the number she has under her control falls to

or below her limit. The limit given on the Master of the Dead table is the maximum number of Hit Dice of mindless undead that the deathwalker can control by any means, including *animate dead*. (That is, casting *animate dead* does not allow the deathwalker to exceed this limit.)

The deathwalker's ability to control undead using master of the dead extends only to skeletons and zombies.

At this point in her development, the deathwalker gains a pale complexion and an unnaturally low body temperature. Her hands are cold to the touch, and her eyes have a glassy look. She takes a –2 penalty on all Fortitude saves to resist negative levels as her life force begins to waver within her physical shell.

Undead Familiar: A deathwalker's familiar is always an undead creature. The deathwalker uses all the standard rules that a wizard would for gaining a familiar, but the creature that arrives immediately becomes undead. Its type changes to undead, and all its Hit Dice become d12s (this does not affect its hit points). Like other undead, it has no Constitution score. It gains darkvision to a range of 60 feet if it did not already have it, and it also gains the standard undead traits, as noted below. Treat the familiar's Hit Dice as equal to its master's for the purpose of turn, rebuke, or bolster attempts. The creature cannot be commanded by anyone save its own master.

DEATHWALKER CLASS SKILLS

The deathwalker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: –

Dex: –

Con: Concentration

Int: Craft, Knowledge (all skills, taken individually), Spellcraft

Wis: Profession

Cha: Bluff

MASTER OF THE DEAD

Deathwalker Level	Maximum HD of Undead
1	5
2	10
3	15
4	20
5	25
6	30
7	35
8	40
9	45
10	50
11	55
12	60
13	65
14	70
15	75
16	80
17	85
18	90
19	95
20	100

DEATHWALKER ADVANCEMENT

	Base Attack	Fort.	Ref.	Will		Spells Per Day*									
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	*Master of the dead*, undead familiar	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3		4	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3		4	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4		4	3	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Aura of the grave	4	3	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5		4	3	3	2	–	–	–	–	–	–
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5		4	4	3	2	1	–	–	–	–	–
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6		4	4	3	3	2	–	–	–	–	–
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6		4	4	4	3	2	1	–	–	–	–
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Shroud of death	4	4	4	3	3	2	–	–	–	–
11th	+5	+3	+3	+7		4	4	4	4	3	2	1	–	–	–
12th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8		4	4	4	4	3	3	2	–	–	–
13th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8		4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	–	–
14th	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9		4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	–	–
15th	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	Mastery of undeath	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	–
16th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10		4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	–
17th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1
18th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2
19th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3
20th	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Mantle of undeath	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

*The number of spells per day listed for each level does not include the character's bonus necromancy spell at each level for specializing in the necromancy school.

Undead Traits: An undead creature is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage to its physical ability scores, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or death from massive damage. It cannot be *raised*, and *resurrection* works only if it is willing.

Aura of the Grave (Ex): At 5th level, the deathwalker continues her slow descent into an undead state. She no longer needs to sleep, and she gains immunity to sleep effects. She also becomes immune to all diseases. Her nerve endings begin to dull, making her less able to feel pain.

The physical effects of the deathwalker's continuing transformation become more marked at this point. Her skin draws tightly over her body, giving her a hollow, empty look. Any person viewing her may make a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 25) to determine that she follows the deathwalker's path. Because of her decreased tactile sense, she may absentmindedly skewer her hand with a needle while deep in thought, singe her hand on a hot stove without noticing, or fail to note the flies that land on her eye or buzz in or near her mouth. Slowly but surely, she continues to lose her grip on life.

Shroud of Death (Ex): As the deathwalker's magical prowess increases, her physical body continues to fail. Yet, in many ways, she becomes stronger than ever. As her body dies, her organs rot in place, but the necromantic energies she has learned to harness keep her bodily processes functioning enough to sustain the shred of life remaining in her.

At 10th level, the deathwalker gains a +4 circumstance bonus on saves against poison, paralysis, and mind-affecting effects. Since her organs have largely ceased functioning, there is a 50% chance that extra damage from a critical hit or sneak attack does not affect her. This ability works much like the fortification special armor quality described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (page 219). She no longer needs to eat or drink to stay alive (although she still must breathe). However, the stench of decay that surrounds her imposes a -2 penalty on Charisma, Bluff, and Diplomacy checks against any creatures except undead.

Mastery of Undeath (Su): At 15th level, the deathwalker gains the ability to force obedience and servitude from even the mightiest undead creatures. The raw force of her necromantic magic combined with the slow replacement of her living body with undead flesh make her appear as a commanding, regal figure to the undead. She gains the ability to rebuke or command undead as an evil cleric of her deathwalker level a number of times per day equal to 1 + her Charisma bonus (if any).

She also develops further outward signs of her descent into undeath. Her stomach bloats and may even split open because of the rot within her body, and her teeth turn yellow and fall from her gums.

Mantle of Undeath: At 20th level, the deathwalker finally becomes an undead creature. She loses her Constitution score and any bonus hit points she had previously gained from it, and her Hit Die type becomes d12 (but the deathwalker's hit point total does not change). Her type changes to undead, and she gains the standard undead traits (see above). She does not lose any of the racial traits she previously possessed, and her attack bonuses, save bonuses, and other statistics are not recalculated.

FLESHCRAFTER

Death is the converse of life. The same forces that can drain a creature's life force can also channel that energy and forge it into useful tools. Thus, although necromancy delves into the power of death, the fleshcrafter can use it to gain control over life, manipulating it to his own ends. His black magic creates unholy abominations—mockeries of life built from the blood and bone of his countless victims. He sees living creatures in the same light that an artist sees a canvas and paints, but his "art" consists of twisting and forming those raw materials into whatever shapes suit his foul goals.

The fleshcrafter lurks at the edge of society, picking off the weak and those unlikely to be missed. His lab might feature still-beating hearts kept alive in a vat of demonic ichor, furniture crafted from creatures' limbs that moves and adjusts itself on command, and half-formed jigsaws of body parts that vaguely resemble humanoid forms. Many fleshcrafters seek out victims who have particular features—innocents with the perfect arms, feet, or other body parts—for their experiments. To the typical fleshcrafter, such victims are like apple trees with fruit ripe for harvest.

Fleshcrafter Class Features

All of the following are class features of the fleshcrafter. When an ability requires humanoid bodies, the fleshcrafter can substitute corpses of different size categories, according to the following equivalences.

One Corpse of This Size Equals . . .	Number of Medium Corpses
Small	1/2
Large	4
Huge	16
Gargantuan	64
Colossal	256

Craft Construct: A fleshcrafter gains Craft Construct (see the *Monster Manual* page 303) as a bonus feat.

Stitched Flesh Familiar: While other spellcasters summon familiars to do their bidding, the fleshcrafter forms his own. He can build a construct familiar with a value of 300 gp by gathering the necessary body parts from three Medium humanoids that he has killed, and making successful DC 18 Craft checks. He must then donate a portion of his own life force to grant his construct the spark of life. This portion of the process costs an additional 100 gp in components. (Failing the Craft check uses up this last 100 gp as well as any other wasted materials and money.) This shared life force creates such a deep bond between the two that the fleshcrafter cannot create another such familiar until his current servant dies.

A stitched flesh familiar gains the abilities indicated on the Stitched Flesh Familiar Abilities table, based on its master's level. It also gains all the abilities described under "Familiar Basics" in the Familiars sidebar in the *Player's Handbook* page 52. Many of the abilities below are standard familiar

abilities, but the stitched flesh familiar gains them at a slower rate. A few are unique to the familiar.

Uncanny Likeness: The close link that the stitched flesh familiar has with its master alters its physical appearance. Anyone who sees the familiar and has already seen its master may make a DC 20 Spot check to note the similarity between the two.

Sustained Spirit: When the fleshcrafter reaches 9th level, his link with his stitched flesh familiar becomes strong enough to survive after death. If a fleshcrafter creates a new stitched flesh familiar to replace a lost one, the newly created servant has all the memories of the previous one, as well as the same personality. Thus, a stitched flesh familiar created to replace one that was killed under mysterious circumstances can remember the details of its predecessor's death (including the killers, if it saw them).

Reaper's Touch (Ex): At 1st level, the fleshcrafter gains such an intimate knowledge of living things that he can increase the chances of a creature's death while appearing to heal it. When using the Heal skill to treat another creature, he may instead double any hit point or ability score damage his patient takes due to any conditions from which it already suffers. The Heal DC decreases by 5 when he uses the skill for this purpose, and the effect lasts for 24 hours. Thus, a creature with fewer than 0 hit points loses 2 hit points per round rather than 1. Furthermore, the affected creature cannot check to stabilize as long as the creature is taking extra damage from this ability. An observer may make a Heal check opposed by the fleshcrafter's Heal check result to notice the latter's sabotage of the patient. A successful Heal check opposed by the fleshcrafter's Heal result or the application of any sort of healing magic is sufficient to halt the accelerated loss of life.

Brink of Life and Death (Ex): At 5th level, the fleshcrafter gains the ability to more rapidly pinpoint the critical veins and organs he must destroy to slay a creature. Thus, he can make a coup de grace attack as a standard action. Furthermore, the fleshcrafter can extend this ability to his stitched flesh familiar as long the latter is within range of its empathic link with him. To share this ability, the fleshcrafter must concentrate on the stitched flesh familiar as a full-round action, but the coup de grace remains a standard action for the stitched flesh familiar.

Forge Flesh: At 10th level, the fleshcrafter unlocks the basic secrets of mimicking life. He may gather body parts to produce custom-designed animated creatures that have a vague

FLESHCRAFTER CLASS SKILLS

The fleshcrafter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: –
Dex: –
Con: Concentration
Int: Craft, Knowledge (all skills, taken individually), Spellcraft
Wis: Heal
Cha: –

FLESHCRAFTER ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Craft Construct, reaper's touch, stitched flesh familiar	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3		4	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3		4	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4		4	3	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Brink of life and death	4	3	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5		4	3	3	2	–	–	–	–	–	–
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5		4	4	3	2	1	–	–	–	–	–
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6		4	4	3	3	2	–	–	–	–	–
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6		4	4	4	3	2	1	–	–	–	–
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Forge flesh	4	4	4	3	3	2	–	–	–	–
11th	+5	+3	+3	+7		4	4	4	4	3	2	1	–	–	–
12th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8		4	4	4	4	3	3	2	–	–	–
13th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8		4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	–	–
14th	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9		4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	–	–
15th	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	Master of life and death	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	–
16th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10		4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	–
17th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1
18th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2
19th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3
20th	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Forge life	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

*The number of spells per day listed for each level does not include the character's bonus necromancy spell at each level for specializing in the necromancy school.

STITCHED FLESH FAMILIAR SPECIAL ABILITIES

Master Class Level	Natural Armor	Int Adj.	Special
1-2	+1	6	Empathic link*, improved evasion*, uncanny likeness
3-4	+2	7	Alertness*, share spells*
5-6	+3	8	Speak with master*, deliver touch spells*
7-8	+4	9	
9-10	+5	10	Sustained spirit
11-12	+6	11	Spell resistance*
13-14	+7	12	*Scry* on familiar*
15-16	+8	13	
17-18	+9	14	
19-20	+10	15	

*This trait is identical to the standard familiar ability of the same name, as given in the sidebar on page 52 in the *Player's Handbook*.

semblance of life, such as chairs with elf legs, or racks built of outstretched arms. Such creatures count as animated objects, although they are crafted from organs, bones, and flesh taken from the fleshcrafter's victims.

For each 2 HD of the animated object to be created, the fleshcrafter must harvest body parts from one Medium creature, make a successful Craft check (DC 20), and devote 200 gp worth of chemicals, noxious fluids, and rare herbs to the creation process. When complete, the animated object obeys the fleshcrafter to the best of its ability without question. A fleshcrafter may create and control animated objects whose total HD are no more than twice his fleshcrafter level.

Master of Life and Death (Su): At 15th level, the fleshcrafter perfects his understanding of life, death, and magic. His spells are so attuned to the patterns and energy of life that they are difficult for living creatures to resist. When the fleshcrafter affects a living creature (that is, any creature other than a construct or undead) with a spell, the DC for the saving throw (if any) increases by +1.

Forge Life (Ex): At 20th level, the fleshcrafter can use his knowledge of arcane magic and biology to create a flesh golem using special, rare methods that only he and others of his class can access. The fleshcrafter need spend only 5,000 gp to produce the golem, although he must still meet all the remaining prerequisites, and spend the standard amount of time and XP based on the value of the flesh golem listed in the *Monster Manual*. In addition, he must collect body parts from the equivalent of at least twenty different Medium humanoids that he personally killed to assemble the golem. The fleshcrafter can create any number of flesh golems in this manner.

SOUL REAPER

Most necromancers care little for the living, regarding them at best as potential sources of new undead servitors and at worst as inconvenient meddlers. The soul reaper takes a radically different approach. Rather than use her magic to expand the power of death, she crafts spells to breach the barrier between the living and the dead. By peering into the cosmic ether, the soul reaper can snatch a creature's spirit in the split second that it hovers between the material world and the afterlife.

By collecting souls in this manner and using obscene rituals to torment and enslave them, the soul reaper can expand her arcane power and conquer her enemies more easily. For this reason, she is perhaps the most feared of the dark magi. A fleshcrafter may kill one or more victims to produce a new servant, but the creature so formed is only an animated physical shell—the life forces of the victims themselves pass on to the afterlife. Other necromancers traffic with evil spirits and mindless undead, but only the soul reaper routinely denies her victims their final reward. Trapped within her service, suspended between life and death, they endure a terrible, lonely existence in which they cater to the whims of a power-hungry wizard. When a diabolical fiend must permanently remove an opponent, he calls upon a soul reaper to trap his foe's spirit. Even a cleric's power to raise the dead fails to function on a soul trapped within a ruby that a soul reaper has tossed into the sea.

Soul Reaper Class Features

All of the following are class features of the soul reaper.

***Inquisitor of the Grave* (Sp):** At 1st level, the soul reaper learns to force information from the recently departed soul of a fresh corpse. Once per day, the soul reaper can use *speak with dead* as a spell-like ability, duplicating the effects of the *speak with dead* spell. The soul reaper must follow all the guidelines and restrictions associated with casting that spell.

Spiritual Vassal: The soul reaper can compel obedience from a host of spirits that she has seized through a foul ceremony and combined into a single spiritual vassal. This ghostly apparition has little effect on the physical world, but besides acting as a familiar, it grants the reaper some of the knowledge the souls used to create it held in life.

A soul reaper dominates and controls the spirits that make up the vassal through a vile ritual that requires 100 gp worth of materials (primarily blood and bone taken from outsiders) and a humanoid creature slain via a ritual sacrifice. After killing her victim, the soul reaper can open a magical link to the afterlife, compel a number of minor spirits to enter the material world, and force them into her service. These spirits combine to form a single entity known as a spiri-

tual vassal that obeys the soul reaper's every command—primarily because it faces terrible repercussions if it refuses to do so. As a free action, a soul reaper can induce wracking agony in her vassal, causing it to howl in pain. The pain immobilizes the vassal (no save) until the reaper wills the effect to end (also a free action). This pitiable creature might moan for an end to its horrid existence even as it moves to oppose the soul reaper's foes.

While the spiritual vassal serves the soul reaper, it is as loyal and trustworthy as a standard wizard's familiar. If it is destroyed, the soul reaper suffers the same drawbacks as a wizard does if her familiar is slain. The spiritual vassal gains all the abilities indicated on the Spiritual Vassal Special Abilities table, based on its master's level. Many of these are the standard abilities of a familiar, but a few are unique to the spiritual vassal. The spiritual vassal also gains all the abilities described under "Familiar Basics" in the Familiars sidebar in the *Player's Handbook* page 52.

Spiritual vassals are rarely encountered without a master. The statistics provided here, for an unbonded vassal, should only actually be used if the vassal's master is slain and it manages to survive. Unbonded vassals constantly whimper and softly moan of their despair, begging any creatures they encounter to end their miserable existence and send the souls trapped in their bodies back to the afterlife.

Spiritual Vassal (unbonded): CR –; Tiny undead; HD 1/2d12; hp 2; Init +1; Spd 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB +0; Grp -8; Atk +1 melee (1-1, slam); Full Atk +1 melee (1-1, slam); SA –; SQ undead traits; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 12, Con –, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

A spiritual vassal looks like a small sphere of pale, glowing light. Those unfamiliar with soul reapers and their servants might mistake one for a will-o'-wisp. When in combat or forced to perform some other unpleasant task, spiritual vassals moan in inarticulate whispers of their pain and misery. Up close, shadowy faces—the spirits of the unfortunate souls bound into the vassal—occasionally appear and fade on the surface of the orb.

Ancestral Knowledge *(Sp):* The spiritual vassal can draw on its memories from life to provide the reaper with advice, skills, and abilities on a temporary basis. Starting at 5th level, the soul reaper can access her spiritual vassal's memories, gaining one of the abilities described below (reaper's choice) once per day. She gains one additional selection per day at 9th level, another at 13th level, and a fourth at 17th level. The soul reaper may mix and match the abilities as

SOUL REAPER CLASS SKILLS

The soul reaper's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: –

Dex: –

Con: Concentration

Int: Craft, Knowledge (all skills, taken individually), Spellcraft

Wis: Profession

Cha: –

SOUL REAPER ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	*Inquisitor of the grave,* spiritual vassal	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3		4	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3		4	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4		4	3	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bind spirit	4	3	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5		4	3	3	2	–	–	–	–	–	–
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5		4	4	3	2	1	–	–	–	–	–
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6		4	4	3	3	2	–	–	–	–	–
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6		4	4	4	3	2	1	–	–	–	–
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Bonus feat	4	4	4	3	3	2	–	–	–	–
11th	+5	+3	+3	+7		4	4	4	4	3	2	1	–	–	–
12th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8		4	4	4	4	3	3	2	–	–	–
13th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8		4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	–	–
14th	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9		4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	–	–
15th	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	Spawn undead servant	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	–
16th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10		4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	–
17th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1
18th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2
19th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3
20th	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Bonus feat	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

*The number of spells per day listed for each level does not include the character's bonus necromancy spell at each level for specializing in the necromancy school.

SPIRITUAL VASSAL SPECIAL ABILITIES

Master Class Level	Natural Armor Adj.**	Int	Special
1–2	+1	10	Alertness*, empathic link*, improved evasion*, share spells*
3–4	+2	11	Deliver touch spells*
5–6	+3	12	*Ancestral knowledge* (1/day), speak with master*
7–8	+4	13	
9–10	+5	14	*Ancestral knowledge* (2/day)
11–12	+6	15	Spell resistance*
13–14	+7	16	*Ancestral knowledge* (3/day), *scry* on familiar*
15–16	+8	17	
17–18	+9	18	*Ancestral knowledge* (4/day)
19–20	+10	19	

*This trait is identical to the standard familiar ability of the same name, as given in the sidebar on page 52 in the *Player's Handbook*.

**Spiritual vassals begin with a +1 natural armor bonus. The number noted here is an improvement to the vassal's existing natural armor

desired within her usage allotment. For example, a 17th-level soul reaper could use the memories of past lives ability four times, or memories of past lives twice and talents of the elders twice, or any combination of the three abilities that adds up to four uses. The reaper's spiritual vassal must be able to communicate with her for this ability to function.

- *Memories of Past Lives:* Drawing on her spiritual vassal's memories, the soul reaper gains a +5 competence bonus on checks made with a skill of her choice. This bonus lasts for 1 minute.
- *Speech of the Ancients:* The soul reaper gains the ability to speak and read a language of her choice for 1 minute.
- *Talents of the Elders:* The soul reaper gains temporary access to a feat of her choice for which she meets the prerequisites. She can use the feat for 1 minute.

Bind Spirit (Su): At 5th level, the soul reaper may attempt to capture the spirit of a dying creature in a gem or crystal worth at least 500 gp. This entrapment requires a standard action, and the soul reaper must ready her action to use it at the moment her victim reaches -10 hit points or is destroyed. The victim may attempt a Will save (DC 15 + the soul reaper's Intelligence modifier) to resist the binding. On a failed save, the victim's spirit is trapped in the gem, where it must remain for 1 day per level the soul reaper possesses in this class, or until the gem is broken or destroyed. As long as the soul is in the gem, the victim cannot be restored to life in any manner. The victim's soul cannot be communicated with or contacted in any way, with the exception of the soul reaper abilities described below.

The soul reaper can choose to use any one of the following benefits once per day while the soul is within the gem.

- Compel the bound soul to answer one yes or no question truthfully.
- Speak any one language the bound soul knows for 1 hour.
- Choose any one skill the bound soul possesses and use its ranks in that skill in place of her own for 1 minute. The soul reaper is considered trained in the use of the skill.

Whether or not the reaper actually uses one of these options, the soul is automatically released at the end of the ability's duration. If the gem or crystal is destroyed, the soul is freed immediately.

Bonus Feat: At 10th level, the soul reaper gains a bonus feat. She may choose any metamagic, item creation, or necromantic feat (see below) for which she meets the prerequisites. She gains another such bonus feat at 20th level.

Spawn Undead Servitor: At 15th level, the soul reaper gains the dreaded ability to force a soul captured via her bind spirit ability to inhabit the body of a skeleton or zombie. By completing a ritual that costs 500 gp per Hit Die of the skeleton or zombie, the reaper can permanently grant it the trapped soul's base attack bonus (if higher than its current one), skill ranks, weapon proficiencies, armor proficiencies, and feats. In addition, the undead creature gains the victim's Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. Other abilities, such as class abilities, special attacks, and special qualities, cannot be transferred in this manner.

This process creates a corrupted, twisted version of the original soul with the soul reaper's alignment in the undead creature. Once the ritual is complete, the trapped soul used in the ritual is freed and moves on to the afterlife normally. The reaper gains no special control over undead creatures created in this way unless she already commands them. For purposes of turning or rebuking undead, an undead servitor counts as 1 1/2 times its actual Hit Dice. Its challenge rating equals its base CR plus 1/4 of the CR of the bound spirit used in the ritual.

CLERICS AND NECROMANCY

In many ways, clerics are the ideal necromancers. Divine magic already places a strong emphasis on life and death with its plethora of spells that can heal or inflict wounds, cure diseases, and so forth. The two new domains detailed below can add even more spice to your divine casting necromancers by expanding their ability to handle undead creatures.

Spirit Domain

The Spirit domain involves the control and manipulation of a creature's immortal soul. The spells to which this domain grants access allow a cleric to

SPIRIT DOMAIN SPELLS

1 **Bane:** Enemies take -1 on attack rolls and saves against fear.
2 **Scare:** Panics creatures of less than 6 HD.
3 **Bestow Curse:** -6 to an ability score; -4 on attack rolls, saves, and checks; or 50% chance of losing each action.
4 **Death Ward:** Grants immunity to death spell and negative energy effects.
5 **Enervation:** Subject gains 1d4 negative levels.
6 **Magic Jar:** Enables possession of another creature.
7 **Eyebite:** Target becomes panicked, sickened, and comatose.
8 **Finger of Death:** Kills one subject.
9 **Soul Bind:** Traps newly dead soul to prevent *resurrection*.

exert his influence over a creature's luck, capture or destroy its soul, or even slay it with mighty magic.

Deities: Any evil deity whose portfolio emphasizes trapping and binding souls can grant access to this domain. Logical candidates might include a god who judges the souls of the damned or a lord of the undead.

Granted Power: You may create a spiritual bond between an item you have created (usually a doll or similar object) and a single enemy. Creating this item requires 100 gp and a sample of the hair, skin, fingernails, or other bodily material of the victim.

You may cast any spell of 3rd level or lower with a touch range on the creature without making a touch attack roll by casting the spell on the bonded object. The creature gains a +2 circumstance bonus on its saving throw (if any) against the effect. You must be within long range (400 ft. + 40 ft./level) of your target and have line of effect to it to use the object in this manner.

You may create one of these items per month, but you may not have more than one active at a time. When you create a new bound item, your previous one loses its power.

Undead Domain

The Undead domain is the province of clerics with a bent for necromancy. While the Death domain focuses on the power of life and death, this one involves the creation and control of undead creatures. Clerics with this domain can, in time, become lords of the walking dead.

Deities: Gods directly associated with the undead and necromancy should have access to this domain.

Granted Powers: You gain a +2 competence bonus on your turning checks to turn or rebuke undead.

UNDEAD DOMAIN SPELLS

1 **Chill Touch:** One touch/level deals 1d6 damage and possibly 1 Str damage.
2 **Command Undead:** Undead creature obeys your commands.
3 **Animate Dead:** Creates undead skeletons and zombies.
4 **Halt Undead:** Immobilizes undead for 1 round/level.
5 **Slay Living:** Touch attack kills subject.
6 **Create Undead:** Create ghouls, ghasts, mummies, or mohrgs.
7 **Undeath to Death:** Destroys 1d4/level HD of undead (max 20d4).
8 **Create Greater Undead:** Create shadows, wraiths, spectres, or devourers.
9 **Wail of the Banshee:** Kills one creature/level.

METAMAGIC FEATS AND THE UNDEAD

The following new metamagic feats make spells more effective with respect to undead creatures. As such, they are particularly useful to necromancers and evil clerics.

Fell Energy Spell [Metamagic]

You add a dose of raw necromantic energy to your beneficial spell, making it especially effective for undead creatures.

Benefit: Any numerical bonus granted by a spell modified with this feat increases by +2 for all undead creatures it affects. This increase does not apply to factors such as range, save DC, healing, or other numerical factors relating to a spell. Only effects described as bonuses gain this benefit. A fell energy spell takes up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

Song of the Dead [Metamagic]

You can add such a powerful dose of necromantic energy to your mind-affecting spells that they function against undead creatures but are useless against all others.

Benefit: A mind-affecting spell modified by this feat works normally against intelligent undead creatures. Mindless undead (those without Intelligence scores) are still immune to its effect, and the altered spell has no effect against living creatures or constructs. A song of the dead spell takes up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level. Note that use of this feat does not make mind-affecting spells affect undead if the spell's description specifies that the target must be living or a particular creature type (other than undead).

Any spells prepared with Song of the Dead become necromancy spells.

NECROMANTIC FEATS

Feats in this category allow a caster to grant special abilities to the mindless undead creatures he creates and controls. By specially preparing corpses for animation, a caster can grant the resulting undead improved fighting abilities and create nasty surprises for his enemies. Although these feats only apply as written to skeletons or zombies, they could be applied, in theory, to other non-intelligent undead at the DM's discretion.

These feats are especially useful for spellcasters who rely on *animate dead* to create servants and guardians. The costs and preparation associated with each necromantic feat must be applied to a corpse or skeleton before *animate dead* is cast upon it in order to gain the benefits described for the resulting undead creature. Most necromantic feats have material component costs, and each also increases the skeleton or

zombie's effective Hit Dice for the purpose of determining how many undead the caster can control. This HD increase does not apply to turning or any other effects.

More than one necromantic feat can be applied to a single undead creature, provided that the caster pays the additional costs. The effective Hit Die increases associated with multiple necromantic feats stack. No necromantic feat can be applied to the same undead creature more than once unless the description specifically allows such usage.

Wizards specializing in necromancy may add these feats to the list of metamagic and item creation feats already available to them as bonus feats. This addition reflects the necromancer's talent and propensity for creating undead creatures.

Bolster Power [Necromantic]
You infuse additional evil energy into an undead creature, making it more difficult for clerics, paladins, and other good creatures to turn.

Benefit: A skeleton or zombie created with this feat gains +1 turn resistance. For the purpose of control, treat the resulting creature as having 1 more Hit Die than it actually does.

Death Curse [Necromantic]
By carving or scribing runes of death and destruction on a skeleton or zombie before animation, you infuse it with an unstable mote of necromantic energy. When the resulting undead creature is destroyed, this energy is unleashed in a small explosion.

Benefit: A skeleton or zombie created with this feat detonates upon destruction, dealing 1d3 points of damage per Hit Die (minimum 1d3) to every creature within a 10-foot spread. A DC 15 Reflex save halves this damage.

Scribing the proper runes upon each skeleton or corpse requires one day of work and 25 gp worth of material components. For the purpose of control, treat the resulting creature as having 2 more Hit Dice than it actually does.

Graveborn Expert [Necromantic]
You form a rudimentary consciousness within a skeleton or zombie, allowing it to perform a few simple tasks requiring a particular skill.

Benefit: An undead creature created with this feat gains a +4 bonus on checks made with a single Strength- or Dexterity-based skill of your choice. (This bonus does not allow it to use trained-only skills.) For the purpose of control, treat the resulting creature as having 1 more Hit Die than it actually does.

Graveborn Warrior [Necromantic]
By carefully guiding the magic that animates a skeleton or zombie, you can grant it the use of a single feat.

Benefit: An undead creature created with this feat gains a bonus feat of your choice in any addition to any feats it normally possesses. The skeleton or zombie must meet the prerequisites for any feat granted by Graveborn Warrior.

You must add crushed gems worth 25 gp per affected creature to the normal material components for *animate dead* in order to create this effect. For the purpose of control, treat the resulting creature as having 1 more Hit Die than it actually does.

Heightened Agility [Necromantic]
You modify the body of a skeleton or zombie to make it more agile than normal.

Benefit: An undead creature created with this feat gains a +4 bonus to its Dexterity.

Prior to animation, you must spend one day modifying each skeleton or corpse and then make a successful DC 13 Heal check to fix these modifications. Furthermore, you must add crushed gems worth 25 gp per affected creature to the normal material components for *animate dead*. For the purpose of control, treat the resulting creature as having 1 more Hit Die than it actually does.

Heightened Strength [Necromantic]
You sew additional muscles into a zombie, or replace a skeleton's bones with thicker ones, granting the resulting undead creature increased physical power.

Benefit: An undead creature created with this feat gains a +4 bonus to its Strength.

Prior to animation, you must spend one day modifying each skeleton or corpse with body parts from a corpse of the same size category, and then make a successful DC 13 Heal check to fix these modifications. Furthermore, you must add crushed gems worth 25 gp per affected creature to the normal material components for *animate dead*. For the purpose of control, treat the resulting creature as having 1 more Hit Die than it actually does.

Uncanny Speed [Necromantic]
You lash thick, strong ligaments and tendons to your undead creation's joints and limbs, making the resulting creature faster than normal.

Benefit: An undead creature created with this feat gains a +2 bonus on initiative checks and a +10-foot increase to its base speed.

Prior to animation, you must spend one day modifying each skeleton or corpse with body parts from a corpse of the same size category, and then make a successful DC 16 Heal check to fix these modifications. Furthermore, you must add crushed gems worth 50 gp per affected creature to the normal material components for *animate dead*. The body you loot for parts cannot be animated. For the purpose of control, treat the resulting creature as having 2 more Hit Dice than it actually does.

Vicious Claws [Necromantic]
You use a file to sharpen a skeleton's finger bones, drive spikes and blades through a zombie's forearms, or otherwise improve your undead creation's ability to deal damage in melee.

Benefit: An undead creature created with this feat gains a +1 bonus on damage rolls when attacking with its natural weapons. A zombie gains this bonus for its slam attack, while a skeleton gains the benefit for its claw attacks. A zombie's slam modified in this way now deals slashing damage as well as bludgeoning damage. The skeleton's claws still deal piercing and slashing damage. See the *Monster Manual* for details on natural weapons and damage types.

Prior to animation, you must spend 5 gp on bladed weapons to add to each undead created in this manner. It takes one day to modify each skeleton or corpse. For the purpose of control, treat the resulting creature as having 1 more Hit Die than it actually does.

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AssassiN

SPECIALTY PRESTIGE CLASSES

by Wil Upchurch · illustrated by Jason Engle

A black-clad figure strikes from the shadows. A lone crossbowman hidden on a rooftop puts a bolt through the mayor's throat and disappears before his victim hits the ground. A sinister stranger at a party hands the lord a goblet of wine dosed with a little something extra. All these scenarios feature classic assassin archetypes.

The assassin prestige class presented in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* is useful for creating a jack-of-all-trades assassin who has access to a variety of abilities. But the standard prestige class lacks expertise in any one particular method of killing.

In most cases, a nonspecialized assassin is just what a DM needs. Sometimes, though, he needs something a little less ordinary. If the local thieves' guild wants to make an example of a merchant who didn't pony up enough gold during a recent shakedown, it calls on an oppressor who knows how to translate pain into profit. If a spurned lover wants her ex-paramour to die an embarrassing death during his engagement party, she hires a poisoner to attend in the guise of a well-wisher and deliver a deadly toxin. If a wealthy merchant has convinced every lord in the kingdom except one to sign a trade pact that will bring him more riches, he can hire a replacement killer to silence the noble and take his place at the pact's signing. All three of these classic villains have places in a fantasy campaign, and each is a master at his or her craft.

Each of the following assassin prestige classes has specific abilities tailored to his or her specialty.

OPPRESSOR

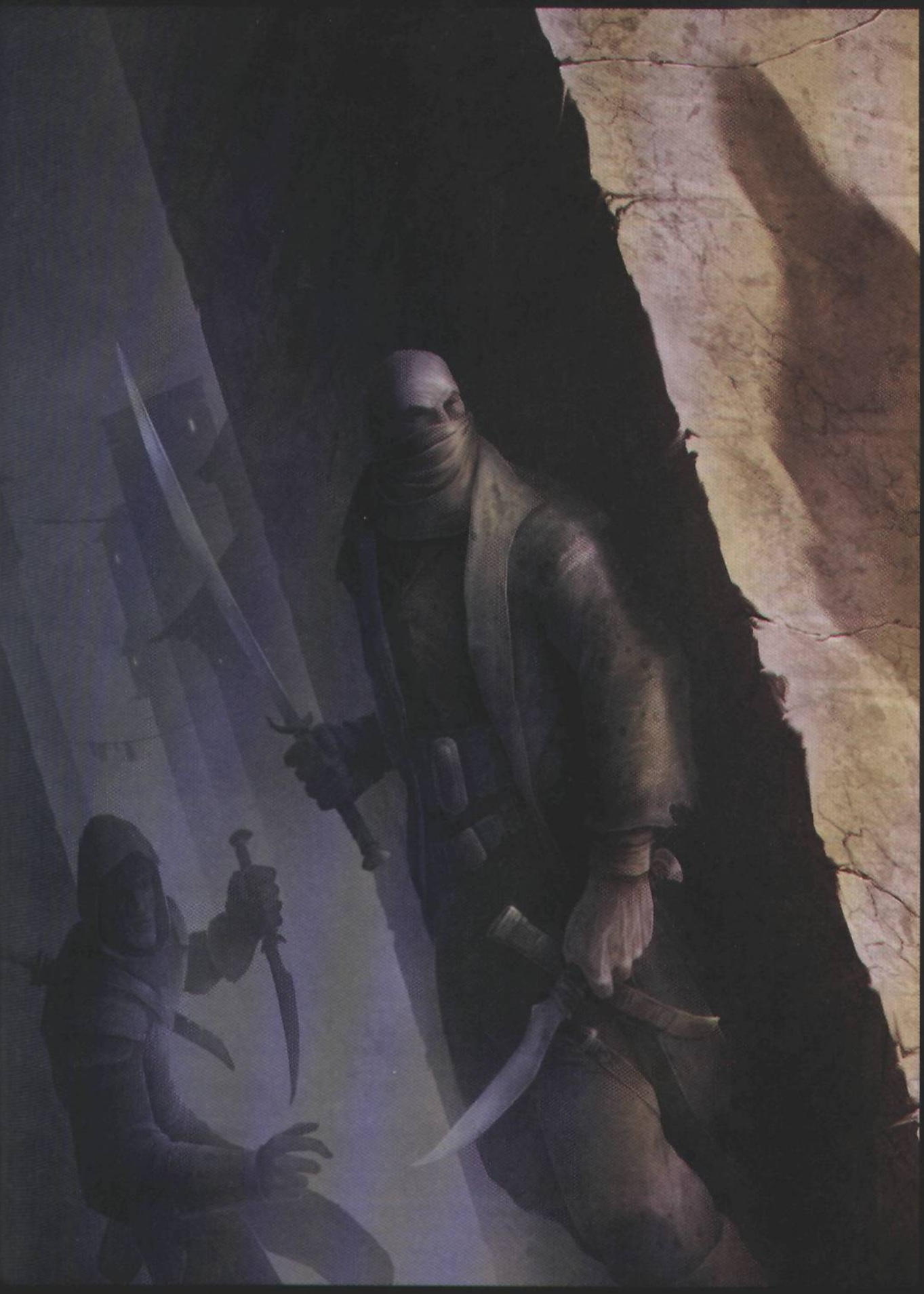
The term assassin conjures an image of a black-hooded rogue slinking through the darkness, poised to put a dagger through the throat of his victim. These silent killers are hired when a murder must be committed without drawing undue attention, or when the one commissioning the deed would like to remain nameless.

Sometimes, however, a killing is meant to send a message to the living. Crimelords often make examples of lackeys who have failed in their tasks, and rulers frequently find it useful to display their intolerance for rabble-rousers and insurrectionists with special shows of force. Even churches sometimes use less-than-subtle methods to prove themselves worthy of their followers' faith and coin. Missions that involve making an example of the victim call for the special talents of an oppressor.

Oppressors specialize in brute-force assassinations, although many of their assignments are less deadly "legbreaking" missions. Members of this prestige class know how to bloody their targets before killing them and how to intimidate bystanders into staying out of the fray. The brutal and violent methods of an oppressor invariably make a lasting impression on the minds of witnesses, who thereafter tend to consider opposing the oppressor's employer an unhealthy prospect.

The typical oppressor is a fulltime employee of a crime boss, thieves' guild, or local ruler. Independent agents are rare in this profession, primarily because the populations that oppressors terrorize would certainly retaliate were the assassins not under the constant protection of their employers. A few oppressors are paid to root out their employers' enemies wherever they lurk or to serve as a symbol of their employers' power. Such agents generally find that traveling with others helps deter the wrath of those they terrorize.

Oppressors are almost universally scorned by the societies in which they work, but most of them never give this social ostracism a second thought. They love their work and get paid well for it, and that is enough for them. Oppressors do not expect the affection of others, nor do they seek it. Theirs is a lonely profession, but those who choose it know the consequences well in advance.



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HIT DIE D8

OPPRESSOR REQUIREMENTS

To qualify as an oppressor, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Intimidate: 8 ranks.

Feats: Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Persuasive.

Sneak Attack: +1d6.

Special: The candidate must have killed someone in public and be a known killer in at least one region.

OPPRESSOR CLASS SKILLS

The oppressor's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim

Dex: Use Rope

Con: —

Int: Craft, Search

Wis: Listen, Sense Motive, Spot

Cha: Bluff, Gather Information, Intimidate

Skill points at each level: 2 + Int modifier.

OPPRESSOR ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Keep awake, sneak attack +1d6
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Brutal grappler
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Intimidating edict
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Sneak attack +2d6
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Greater intimidation, infamy
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Sneak attack +3d6
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Intimidating presence
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Bonus feat
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Sneak attack +4d6

Oppressor Class Features

All the following are class features of the oppressor prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: An oppressor gains no new weapon or armor proficiencies.

Keep Awake (Ex): Whenever the oppressor deals enough damage to reduce an opponent to fewer than 0 hit points, he may instead choose to deal only enough damage to disable that opponent (placing him at exactly 0 hit points). Furthermore, if the oppressor has dealt a creature nonlethal damage that would normally cause it to become unconscious, he may choose to deal only enough to render the opponent staggered.

Sneak Attack: This ability functions exactly like the rogue ability of the same name, as described in the *Player's Handbook*. At 1st level, the oppressor deals 1d6 points of bonus damage with a sneak attack. The extra damage dealt increases by an additional +1d6 every third oppressor level (at 4th, 7th, and 10th). If the oppressor already has the sneak attack ability from another class, the damage bonuses stack.

Brutal Grappler (Ex): Beginning at 2nd level, the oppressor can add his sneak attack damage to the unarmed damage he deals when grappling, so long as the grappled foe is susceptible to sneak attack damage. All the damage from this attack (including his normal unarmed damage) is considered nonlethal.

Intimidating Edict (Su): When the oppressor reaches 3rd level, he gains the ability to use his brutal punishment of one opponent as a warning to others. If the oppressor has used his keep awake ability in full view of bystanders with Intelligence scores of 3 or higher, he can issue an edict admonishing those bystanders to perform or avoid a particular action. This ability functions exactly like a *mass suggestion* spell, cast by a spellcaster of the oppressor's character level. The oppressor can only issue one intimidating edict a day. The save DC of this ability is 16 + the oppressor's Charisma bonus, or 18 + the oppressor's Charisma bonus if the person he has harmed is a leader or someone respected by those he is intimidating (DM's judgment).

An intimidating edict can be an admonition to pay the local thieves' guild the protection money it demands, a warning not to organize resistance against a local ruler, or any similar suggestion. Each edict may reference only one course of action; thus, a single intimidating edict could not coerce onlookers to pay protection money and forego organizing a resistance movement. A creature can be affected by only one edict at a time (although they can still be affected by different *suggestion* spells or effects while under the effects of an intimidating edict); creatures already under the effect of an intimidating edict are not affected by subsequent ones until the first wears off.

Intimidating edict is a supernatural, mind-affecting ability.

Greater Intimidation (Ex): By the time he reaches 5th level, the oppressor has honed his intimidation skills to exceptional levels. When he uses the Intimidate skill to change another's behavior, the attempt takes only 5 rounds instead of the usual 1 minute. When he uses it to demoralize an opponent, the attempt requires only a move-equivalent action rather than a standard action.

Infamy (Ex): Upon reaching 5th level, the oppressor has gained a reputation as a bringer of violence in any regions where he has plied his trade. As a result, he takes a -2 penalty on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks made in areas where he is known. He also gains a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks against anyone who knows his infamous reputation.

Bonus Feat: At 6th level and again at 9th level, the oppressor can select any feat for which he qualifies from the list of fighter bonus feats (see the Fighter class description in the *Player's Handbook*). This feat counts as a bonus feat for him.

Intimidating Presence (Su): By 8th level, the oppressor is so adept at his arts that his presence unnerves those around him. As a result, any creature with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher that attempts to harm him must first succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + oppressor level + oppressor's Charisma modifier) or become shaken for 1 round

as if it were the target of a successful Intimidate check by the oppressor. (See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for more details.) A creature that succeeds at the save is immune to that oppressor's intimidating presence for one day.

Intimidating presence is a supernatural, mind-affecting ability.

POISONER

While some assassins favor the use of the blade and bow for doing their dirty work, others rely primarily on poisonous concoctions. Poisoners take the study of poisons and their use to a level beyond that which ordinary assassins achieve. These specialists learn how to brew and mix poisons on their own and how to introduce them into their victims' bodies in the subtlest possible ways. Such characters are always experimenting with new mixtures and creative methods for delivery. All assassins are well versed in the use of poisons, but the poisoner is truly a master of the art.

HIT DIE D6

POISONER REQUIREMENTS

To become a poisoner, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any evil.

Bluff: 5 ranks.

Craft (Poisonmaking): 8 ranks.

Feat: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (blowgun)

Sleight of Hand: 8 ranks.

Special: The character must have used poison to kill a specific person.

POISONER CLASS SKILLS

The poisoner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim

Dex: Balance, Hide, Move Silently, Open Lock, Sleight of Hand, Tumble, Use Rope

Con: –

Int: Craft, Decipher Script, Forgery, Search

Wis: Listen, Sense Motive, Spot

Cha: Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Gather Information, Intimidate

Skill points at each level: 8 + Int modifier.

Poisoner Class Features

All of the following are class features of the poisoner prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A poisoner gains no new proficiencies with armor or weapons.

***Detect Poison* (Sp):** The poisoner can use *detect poison* at will.

Poison Touch (Ex): The poisoner has worked with poisons for so long that she can spontaneously generate a single dose of poison from her body, although the venom so created lasts only a short time before it loses its potency. She must concentrate for 3 rounds to produce the poison, and she cannot perform any strenuous activities during that time. She may move, engage in conversation, and perform other normal activities, but she may not fight, cast spells, use a magic item, or perform any similar activities that require concentration.

Once generated, the poison can be delivered only once and remains viable for up to 3 rounds before losing its potency. During this time, the poisoner can deliver it via a successful melee touch attack. A missed attack does not ruin the poison. Poison delivered in this manner is considered contact poison.

The primary and secondary effects of the poison and its save DC are determined by the poisoner's level in the prestige class, as given in the table below. The character may choose any effect available at her current level or lower from any column for both the initial and secondary damage, but she must make her selection before she begins to generate the poison. She may not thereafter alter this choice without restarting the entire process. All damage dealt by her poison is temporary ability damage unless otherwise noted.

Poison Use: The poisoner is trained in the use of poison and never risks accidentally poisoning herself when applying it to a blade.

Sneak Attack: This ability functions exactly like the rogue ability of the same name, as described in the *Player's Handbook*. At 1st level, the poisoner deals 1d6 points of bonus damage with a sneak attack. The extra damage dealt increases by an additional +1d6 every other poisoner level (at 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th). If the poisoner already has the sneak attack ability from another class, the damage bonuses stack.

POISON TOUCH EFFECTS

Poisoner Level	Str or Dex Damage	Con Damage	Int, Wis, or Cha Damage	Save DC
1-2	1d2	–	1	14
3-4	1d3	1	1d2	16
5-6	1d4	1d2	1d3	18
7-8	1d6	1d3	1d4	19
9-10	2d4	1d4	1d6	20

POISONER ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	*Detect poison*, poison touch, poison use, sneak attack +1d6
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	+2 save against poison, blowgun mastery, poisoner's art (delay onset)
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Quick hands, sneak attack +2d6
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	+4 save against poison, poisoner's art (fast acting I), poisonous sneak attack
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Sneak attack +3d6
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	+6 save against poison, poison breath
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	Sneak attack +4d6
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	+8 save against poison, poisoner's art (fast acting II)
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	Sneak attack +5d6
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Poison gaze, poison immunity

FOR YOUR CHARACTER

Most D&D campaigns focus on heroic characters and their actions, so the assassin prestige class and the variants presented here aren't likely to find their way into players' hands in such gaming groups. If you happen to be playing in a campaign that allows evil characters, then any of these prestige classes can be an interesting alternative to the standard assassin that other players might be expecting. Since these classes share many of the standard assassin's prerequisites and abilities, unsuspecting PCs and NPCs alike may be in for a nasty surprise.

FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

Standard assassins might find training nearly anywhere in your campaign world, but perhaps only one training center exists for each of these specialized assassin prestige classes. Oppressors could come from a city in which the harsh slave pits have become fertile breeding grounds for the sadistic and brutal techniques of that profession. A poisoner candidate might have to seek out a yuan-ti shaman who lives in the desolate southern swamps in order to learn her arts. Replacement killers might be trained by a doppelganger that secretly heads up a renowned guild in your world's largest city.

These specialized assassins certainly don't lurk around every street corner, and introducing one into your campaign can have considerable impact on the players and their characters. The mystery left in the assassin's wake is a strong clue that something different is afoot. An assassin's work can be the launching point for an entire campaign, and the characters might even meet him before they are ready to deal with him. Such an early encounter can provide them with a personal incentive to follow the assassin's trail, especially if he gains the upper hand on them.

BLOWGUN

Exotic Weapon—Ranged

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Blowgun	1 gp	1	×2	10 ft.	2 lb.	Piercing
Needles, Blowgun	1 gp	—	—	—	*	—

*No weight worth noting

CRAFT (POISONMAKING) DCS*

Poison	DC to Create
Arsenic	15
Black adder venom	15
Black lotus extract	35
Bloodroot	15
Blue whinnis	15
Burnt othur fumes	25
Carrion crawler brain juice	15
Dark reaver powder	25
Deathblade	25
Dragon bile	30
Giant wasp poison	20
Greenblood oil	15
Id moss	15
Insanity mist	20
Large scorpion venom	20
Lich dust	20
Malyss root paste	20
Medium spider venom	15
Nitharit	20
Oil of taggit	15
Purple worm poison	20
Sassone leaf residue	20
Shadow essence	20
Small centipede poison	15
Striped toadstool	15
Terinav root	25
Ungol dust	20
Wyvern poison	25

*For more information on poisons see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Save Bonus against Poison (Ex): The poisoner trains with poisons of all types and slowly grows more and more resistant to their effects. To reflect this increased resistance, the poisoner gains a +2 bonus on all saves against poison at 2nd level. With every two poisoner levels she gains thereafter, the bonus increases by +2 (to +4 at 4th level, +6 at 6th level, and +8 at 8th level). When she reaches 10th level, poison of any type no longer affects her (see Poison Immunity, below).

Blowgun Mastery (Ex): Beginning at 2nd level, a poisoner gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls made with blowguns. In addition, the blowgun's range increment is doubled for the poisoner.

Poisoner's Art (Ex): Poisoners understand the art of poisoncraft better than others. As a result, they can modify poisons they create in several ways. The poisoner must determine any modified effects upon creation of the poison. She may not modify any existing poison to give it one of these effects.

Delay Onset: At 2nd level, the poisoner learns to delay the onset (that is, the save against the initial damage) of any poison by up to 1 minute per poisoner level. The market price for a poison with a delayed onset is 1.5 times normal.

Fast Acting I: At 4th level, the poisoner learns to shorten the period of time between a poison's initial and secondary damage. A poison with this modification requires a saving throw to avoid secondary damage only 5 rounds after the initial save. The market price for this sort of fast-acting poison is twice normal.

Fast Acting II: At 8th level, the poisoner can reduce the time between a poison's initial and secondary damage still more. The secondary effect of a poison altered in this manner occurs on the round following its initial effect. The market price for this type of fast-acting poison is four times normal.

Quick Hands: At 3rd level, the poisoner gains a +4 bonus on Sleight of Hand checks made to plant poison without being seen.

Poisonous Sneak Attack: When the poisoner reaches 4th level, the DC to resist any poison she delivers via a sneak attack increases by +2.

Poison Breath (Ex): Beginning at 6th level, the poisoner may deliver the poison generated by her poison touch ability to any foe within 5 feet simply

by breathing in its direction. Poison delivered in this manner counts as an inhaled poison.

Poison Gaze (Su): At 10th level, the poisoner may spontaneously generate poison in the body of any single target within 30 feet via a gaze attack. The opponent can resist the gaze attack with a successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + poisoner level + poisoner's Constitution modifier). If the opponent fails this save, he must make saves versus the poison normally. Success indicates the creature is unaffected by the gaze and need not make saves against the poison. The poisoner uses the Poison Touch Effects table above to select the parameters of the poison. She must make eye contact with her foe as a standard action to use this ability; simply looking at the opponent is not enough. Poison delivered in this manner counts as ingested.

Poison Immunity (Ex): Upon reaching 10th level, the poisoner becomes immune to all forms of poison.

REPLACEMENT KILLER

By far the most dangerous member of any assassin's guild is the replacement killer. Kings and other political leaders find this specialist in espionage to be worth his weight in gold—not just for removing inconvenient enemies or rivals, but also for achieving political goals.

A replacement killer secretly assassinates his target and then replaces him, wreaking havoc with the victim's authority before revealing that he is dead. This tactic is particularly valuable for ensuring the outcome that the assassin's employer desires in treaty negotiations, major public policy announcements, and the like.

Replacement killers focus on developing strong social skills and effective disguises as well as on efficient killing, since what happens after the victim's death is even more important than the method of assassination. They often debilitate their victims so that they can interrogate them, learn their

HIT DIE D6

REPLACEMENT KILLER REQUIREMENTS

To qualify as a replacement killer, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any evil.

Bluff: 8 ranks.

Diplomacy: 5 ranks.

Disguise: 8 ranks.

Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty): 3 ranks.

Sense Motive: 5 ranks.

Feats: Deceitful, Skill Focus (Disguise).

REPLACEMENT KILLER CLASS SKILLS

The replacement killer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim

Dex: Balance, Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, Open Lock, Sleight of Hand, Tumble, Use Rope

Con: —

Int: Craft, Disable Device, Forgery, Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility and royalty), Search

Wis: Listen, Profession, Sense Motive, Spot

Cha: Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Gather Information, Intimidate

Skill points at each level: 8 + Int modifier.

REPLACEMENT KILLER ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Death attack, poison use, sneak attack +1d6
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Greater paralyzing attack +1, uncanny dodge
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Sneak attack +2d6, *disguise self*
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Greater paralyzing attack +2, inconspicuous disguise
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Improved uncanny dodge, sneak attack +3d6
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Greater paralyzing attack +3, undetectable alignment
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	Sneak attack +4d6, *greater invisibility*
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	Greater paralyzing attack +4, improved inconspicuous disguise
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	Sneak attack +5d6, *modify memory*
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Greater paralyzing attack +5

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secrets, and continue to gain valuable information (and even advice) as the ruse goes forward.

Replacement Killer Class Features

All of the following are class features of the replacement killer prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A replacement killer gains no new proficiencies with armor or weapons.

Death Attack: If a replacement killer studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack has the additional effect of possibly either paralyzing or killing the target (replacement killer's choice). While studying the victim, the replacement killer can undertake other actions so long as his attention stays focused on the target and the target does not detect him or recognize him as an enemy. If the victim of such an attack fails a Fortitude save (DC 10 + replacement killer level + replacement killer's Int modifier) against the kill effect, she dies. If the saving throw fails against the paralysis effect, the victim's mind and body become enervated, rendering her helpless and unable to act for 1d6 rounds plus 1 round per level of the replacement killer. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal sneak attack. Once the replacement killer has completed the 3 rounds of study, he must make the death attack within the next 3 rounds. If a death attack is attempted and fails (the victim makes her save) or if the replacement killer does not launch the attack within 3 rounds of completing the study, 3 new rounds of study are required before he can attempt another death attack.

Poison Use: The replacement killer is trained in the use of poison and never risks accidentally poisoning himself when applying it to a blade.

Sneak Attack: This ability functions exactly like the rogue ability of the same name, as described in the *Player's Handbook*. At 1st level, the replacement killer deals 1d6 points of bonus damage with a sneak attack. The extra damage dealt increases by an additional +1d6 every other replacement killer level (at 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th). If the replacement killer already has the sneak attack ability from another class, the damage bonuses stack.

Greater Paralyzing Attack (Ex): When the replacement killer reaches 2nd level and at every other level thereafter (at 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th), the DC to resist his death attack increases by the indicated amount when he chooses to paralyze his victim rather than kill her outright.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Beginning at 2nd level, a replacement killer gains the ability to react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to even be aware of it. He retains his Dexterity bonus (if any) to AC regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. (He still loses any Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized.)

If the replacement killer already has uncanny dodge from another class (such as a barbarian/rogue), he automatically gains improved uncanny dodge (see below) instead.

***Disguise Self* (Sp):** At 3rd level, the replacement killer can cast *disguise self* three times per day as a caster of his character level.

Inconspicuous Disguise (Ex): Suspicious observers do not get automatic Spot checks to note any disguise worn by a 4th-level or higher replacement killer. He is too good at applying the disguise and adopting the mannerisms of his new persona to arouse suspicion in any but the most interested parties.

Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 5th level, a replacement killer can no longer be flanked, since he can react to opponents on opposite sides of him as easily as he can react to a single attacker. This defense denies rogues the ability to use flank attacks to sneak attack him. The exception to this defense is that a rogue at least four levels higher than the replacement killer can flank him (and thus sneak attack him).

If the replacement killer already has improved uncanny dodge, the levels from any other classes granting uncanny dodge stack for the purpose of determining the minimum rogue level required to flank him.

Undetectable Alignment (Su): At 6th level, the replacement killer's alignment cannot be detected by any means, as the *undetectable alignment* spell. The replacement killer can activate or deactivate this ability at will as a free action.

***Greater Invisibility* (Sp):** A 7th-level replacement killer can cast *greater invisibility* once per day as a caster of his character level.

Improved Inconspicuous Disguise (Ex): When the replacement killer reaches 8th level, contact with people who know the specific individual he is replacing does not automatically provoke an opposed check. In addition, the Spot check bonus for such a viewer decreases by -4.

***Modify Memory* (Sp):** At 9th level, the replacement killer can cast *modify memory* twice per day as a caster of his character level.

CAMPAIGN HOOKS

Below are three campaign hooks, each tailored especially for one of the prestige classes presented in this article.

Oppressor: A mayoral election is coming up in the city where the characters are staying, and an oppressor has been beating warnings into the leaders of several political organizations. Since none of the major political parties has been spared, there is rampant speculation as to who might be paying to have a message delivered so brutally.

Poisoner: Several wealthy patrons fell dead at a recent art show. No food or drink was served, and no wounds were found on the bodies, but a local healer is nevertheless convinced that the victims were poisoned.

Replacement Killer: The PCs are attending a peace conference between two warring nations. Just as the accord is about to be signed, the noble who sponsored it declares that he has changed his mind. He has a strange list of demands, many of which seem to do him more harm than good, politically speaking.

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THIEVES OF WILL

Evil Enchanters

by Owen K.C. Stephens
illustrated by Michael Phillippi

If asked to describe an evil spellcaster, most people summon visions of necromancers raising armies of undead and evokers laying waste to whole villages. Enchanters, spellcasters who manipulate minds and pervert the most basic beliefs, receive little notice. Few people give much thought to the insidious power of mind-affecting magic. Spells such as *charm person* and *suggestion* might seem nonviolent combat options, but every application of these spells twists the will of their targets, forcing them to act and believe abnormally.

Although not all enchanters are villainous, as a group they tend to be arrogant and self-centered. The stock-in-trade of the enchanter is to steal the free will of others, replacing their thoughts, hopes, dreams, and desires with those of his own choosing. While a few follow a code of ethics that defines when to use such spells (generally only against dangerous foes), many are soon corrupted by the power they wield. An enchanter not only eliminates a foe with a single spell—he turns his enemies into allies or even slaves. Rather than merely paralyze an opponent with *hold person*, an enchanter can *suggest* to it that an illusionist has switched the appearance and sound of its enemies and allies, then work with that creature to destroy its "foes."

What's worse, enchanters can spread their influence like disease, *charming* guards to gain access to their charges or *dominating* children to get at their parents. A powerful enchanter can control an entire kingdom without ever placing

himself at physical risk. The worst of the breed revel in their power over others, turning foes into puppets and surrounding themselves with servants and courtesans enslaved by mind-affecting magic.

An "enchanter" need not be a specialist wizard. Anyone who has the ability to use enchantment magic effectively, such as a bard or even a cleric, is an enchanter for the purposes of this discussion.

THE BASICS OF ENCHANTMENT

All enchantment spells are mind-affecting. They create nothing physical or even quasi-physical, but their results are nonetheless real. They manipulate or destroy perception and will, thus controlling the actions of any thinking thing. Enchantment spells fall into two broad categories: charms (which alter perception) and compulsions (which require a particular action). Compulsion spells produce direct results, while charm spells are subtle and thus harder for allies of a target to spot.

Another way to define enchantment spells is by whether they neutralize, enhance, or influence. *Sleep*, *hold person*, and *confusion* are typical neutralizing spells: They manipulate free will, but only to prevent a foe from acting effectively. *Heroism* and *rage* enhance a target's performance. But influencing spells, such as *suggestion* and *dominate person*, raise serious ethical issues—they not only neutralize a foe, but leave it at the mercy of the caster. These spells are the most versatile of the school, most popular with enchanters, and most easily used for evil. Forcing someone to believe you are her friend, or to turn against her own family, is a form of violation.

ENCHANTER METHODS

A few basic techniques and skills are used by nearly all enchanters, making them far more dangerous than a common bard with *charm person*, and a great deal harder to find or stop. Enchanters know they are safest if they do not expose themselves, allowing enthralled creatures to take the risks instead. This often means a cover story, a false persona that discourages others from suspecting the enchanter's true power and motives. Dedicated enchanters might actually master a second career, and use that lifestyle as a front to gain access to more victims.

Because many enchantment spells are language-dependent (such as *suggestion*) or far more effective when communication is possible (such as *charm person*), enchanters are often excellent linguists. Others depend on magic to overcome language barriers, keeping a *tongues* spell prepared at all times. Weaker and lazier enchanters simply cast their spells on members of their own culture.

A being under the influence of a spell has a magical aura, but one that has resisted its effects does not. Because of this, a common trick is to check a target for the presence of enchantment magic prior to casting a subtle mind-affecting spell from concealment. Then the enchanter casts *detect magic* again. If the target now has an enchantment aura, it's under the effects of the spell.

Enchanter Archetypes

Beyond these basics, an enchanter's methods and victims are determined by his style of operation. Many ways exist to use the power to bend minds, and no two enchanters follow exactly the same methodology. Three common archetypes of evil enchanters are sketched out below.

The Grifter

This type of enchanter swindles people out of their wealth. Most grifters are motivated purely by greed. They see scams and confidence games as an easy and safe way to gain the comforts they desire. Some take on the role of courtesan, covertly manipulating the target's affections, while others become betrothed or even married to wealthy marks. A grifter sticks to one or two targets at a time: Lower-level and younger enchanters tend to make a big score, then move on, while more experienced practitioners might milk a good target for months or years.

One common trick is to become a fake healer. The grifter either finds someone who believes he suffers from a condition he doesn't have (surprisingly common among rich merchants and minor nobles), or convinces a mark that he is ill. The grifter then promises to cure the ailment; once paid, she uses enchantment to make the person feel better or compels him to take better care of himself. If the payments stop, the grifter goads the mark with *suggestions* to do things that make him ill, or plagues him with *confusion* or *feeblemind* spells at crucial moments.

Bards make the best grifters. Their wide range of social skills lets them get close to marks (often by posing as entertainers or scholars) and disguise their spellcasting abilities. Sorcerers are the second most common class for grifters. Wizards are rare, encumbered as they are with bulky and potentially damning spellbooks.

The Mastermind

The mastermind does everything through agents, thralls, hirelings, and dupes. As he grows in power, the core of his network consists of lieutenants whose loyalty does not require magic, while dangerous tasks are left to hirelings and innocents controlled with compulsion spells. The most common sort is the criminal mastermind whose operation duplicates that of a thieves' guild. With the help of enchantment magic he can weed out traitors, employ suicide attacks, and arrange for inside jobs.

Less common, but far more dangerous, are the arcane masterminds. These enchanters operate at least partially in the open by running academies of magic. There they test students for the temperament to take advantage of others and teach them the basics of enchantment. Those who follow the enchanter's path willingly become lieutenants, while more upright students become *charmed* allies, or even scapegoats if the organization is exposed.

The Warlord

Warlords are like masterminds in that they seek to control large groups, augmenting their natural leadership skills with magical persuasion. But while masterminds usually keep their organizations secret, warlords are very much in the public eye. They build armies (or at least adventuring or mercenary companies) using enchantment to enforce loyalty, recruit specialists, extract information, and inspire suicidal dedication.

NEW DOMAINS

The two new domains presented below are appropriate for a small range of deities. Most clerics who select these domains are evil and fall into one of the enchanter categories described above. In a few rare cases a non-evil cleric might take one of these domains to overcome foes without violence, but even these are generally of neutral alignment.

BEGUILEMENT DOMAIN

Deities: Gods of trickery, rulership, and magic might grant access to this domain.

Granted Power: You cast compulsion spells at +1 caster level.

Beguilement Domain Spells

1 **Hypnotism:** Fascinates 2d4 HD of creatures.
2 **Enthrall:** Captivates all within 100 ft. + 10 ft./level.
3 **Hypnotic Pattern:** Fascinates (2d4 + level) HD of creatures.
4 **Deep Slumber:** Puts 10 HD of creatures to sleep.
5 **Confusion:** Subjects behave oddly for 1 round/level.
6 **Modify Memory:** Changes 5 minutes of subject's memories.
7 **Suggestion, Mass:** As *suggestion*, plus one subject/level.
8 **Hold Person, Mass:** As *hold person*, but all within 30 ft.
9 **Otto's Irresistible Dance:** Forces subject to dance.

SEDUCTION DOMAIN

Deities: Gods of beauty, desire, love, and courtesans might grant access to this domain.

Granted Power: You gain a +1 bonus on all Charisma checks and all opposed Charisma-based skill checks.

Seduction Domain Spells

1 **Charm Person:** Makes one person your friend.
2 **Eagle's Splendor:** Subject gains +4 to Cha for 1 min./level.
3 **Geas, Lesser:** Commands subject of 7 HD or less.
4 **Suggestion:** Compels subject to follow stated course of action.
5 **Charm Monster:** Makes monster believe it is your ally.
6 **Dominate Person:** Controls humanoid telepathically.
7 **Charm Monster, Mass:** As *charm monster*, but all within 30 ft.
8 **Dominate Monster:** As *dominate person*, but any creature.
9 **Demand:** As *sending*, plus you can send *suggestion*.

Warlords are the only evil enchanters who make extensive use of enhancing spells to augment themselves and their loyal allies.

Warlords in service to a lord or ruler are powerful generals who can recruit forces in a fraction of the normal time. No mission is too difficult or dangerous for a *dominated* soldier to attempt, and commanders with fanatically loyal troops are willing to face forces much larger than their own.

However, many warlords wish to rule, not serve. These enchanters either strike into the wilderness to carve out their own empires, foment rebellion against existing lords, or starting as little more than brigands. Some blur the line between masterminds and warlords by assuming command over a lord's existing knights and captains, then subtly poisoning their minds against their rightful liege.

Enchanter Classes

Although characters of any class with a strong spellcasting ability can become evil enchanters, their natural talents strongly influence how they employ their mind-affecting powers.

Bard

Bards make great enchanters. With their Charisma-based spellcasting and access to many social skills, they can maximize their spells' effectiveness and get close to a variety of potential targets. A bard can easily disguise himself as an average warrior or rogue to avoid suspicion if an enchantment spell is discovered. Bards often become grifters and masterminds, using enchantment magic to enhance their ability to discover secrets and odd lore, which they parlay into vast sums of money through extortion and blackmail. Although bardic warlords are much less common, their ability to cast freely in light armor makes them a little more comfortable on the battlefield than sorcerers or wizards.

Cleric

In general, evil clerical enchanters either worship a god of domination, rulership, or seduction, and can prepare enchantment spells from one or more domains, or they simply gain access to enchantment in service to an evil deity. In the first case, the cleric might take any role, although grifters are certainly the least common. The second sort of cleric is most likely to be a warlord, using enchanted troops to smite his deity's foes and seducing the servants of other deities.

Druid

Druids depend on summoned allies to overcome enemies, but few pervert animals into shock troops or suicidal attackers. Druid enchanters exploit animals and plants much as other spellcasters use intelligent creatures. Such vile abusers of nature are surprisingly powerful, especially since they can go for a long time without being discovered. For example, a druid might do a great deal of damage by stealing a dire bear's cubs, then convincing the mother that the humans of a nearby village are responsible. The villagers will most likely explain the event as a maddened animal attack rather than search for another culprit. A more advanced druid can simply use *dominate animal* to take over a powerful creature, then command it to hunt down lone townsfolk in the wild. If such a druid does use human accomplices, she controls them through fear of her animals rather than magical manipulation.

Sorcerer

Sorcerers are well suited to making the Charisma checks mind-affecting spells sometimes require. With such a limited selection, enchantment spells are very attractive to a sorcerer—a *charmed* creature is a versatile tool. Being able to cast many spells per day lets sorcerers surround themselves with enthralled agents and befuddled slaves.

Sorcerers rarely become warlords, since they avoid the martial risks such a position entails. Some do take up lives as grifters, but by far the most common sorcerer enchanters are masterminds. These build organizations not only to expand their network of thralls, but also to include specialists who compensate for the sorcerer's own narrow focus. It is not at all unusual to find bards focused on the pursuit of ancient

lore and wizards studying destructive spells high in the organization of the sorcerous mastermind.

Wizard

Specialist wizards can be the most powerful and versatile enchanters, but they are fairly rare. They often have low Charisma scores, which makes enchantment magic less attractive, and specialization requires giving up two other schools. Such enchanters usually do without conjuration, since they can *charm* allies instead of summoning them, and illusion—why bother fooling everyone, when you can just manipulate the two or three most important in a group? Many instead give up necromancy (since undead can't be *charmed* anyway) or evocation, preferring subtler spells to "flash-bang" attacks. Specialist enchanters almost always become grifters or masterminds.

Slightly more common are wizards who don't specialize but accumulate a variety of enchantment spells. With a broader range of choices, such a wizard is more likely to become a warlord. She might start by building fanatically loyal forces to protect her own stronghold, then expand her authority into other realms. Many wizard tyrants fall into this category, often using *charmed* monstrous troops to guard borders and destroy foes.

FEATS

Enchanters often take metamagic feats to augment their spellcasting abilities, especially Silent Spell, Still Spell, and Heighten Spell. These allow an enchanter to cast spells with very few outward signs and to bypass common arcane defenses. A silent, still *charm person* can be cast in court on a noble or high advisor with very little risk of discovery. If heightened to 4th level or higher, it can penetrate *lesser globe of invulnerability*.

Truly dedicated enchanters turn to more specialized feats to get the most out of their spells. Spell Focus and Greater Spell Focus can increase the Difficulty Class of saves against all the caster's enchantment spells. Negotiator and Persuasive improve the chances of talking one's way past flunkies to gain access to more valuable targets.

New Feats

Enchanters can use the feats described below to run specific operations or focus even more on the power of their mind-affecting spells.

Charming [General]

You are particularly convincing when attempting to command targets of your mind-affecting spells.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, Negotiator.

Benefit: When you make a Charisma check to exert control over the target of a mind-affecting spell you cast, you gain a +3 bonus on this roll. This applies to checks to convince the target of a spell from the *charm person* spell chain to take an action it normally wouldn't, as well as to opposed Charisma checks made by two casters whose spells affect the same target and who give it conflicting orders.

Combat Charm [General]

Your *charm* spells are equally effective in combat and noncombat situations.

Prerequisites: Wis 13.

Benefit: When casting a *charm* spell (such as *charm animal, charm person or charm monster*) on a creature being threatened by you or your allies, it does not gain the usual +5 bonus to its save against the spell.

Commanding [General]

The targets of your compulsion spells find them difficult to resist.

Prerequisites: Cha 15, Persuasive.

Benefit: Add +1 to the Difficulty Class for all saving throws against your compulsion spells. This bonus stacks with the bonuses from Spell Focus (enchantment) and Greater Spell Focus (enchantment).

Puppet Master [General]

It is more difficult to notice manipulation of the targets of your enchantment spells.

Prerequisites: Wis 13.

Benefit: Add +5 to the DC of a Sense Motive check to notice that the target of one of your mind-affecting spells is being magically influenced (DC 30 for most spells, 20 for *dominate person* or *dominate monster*).

NEW SPELLS

Experienced enchanters soon become dissatisfied with the limitations of most mind-affecting spells and set about researching improved versions or alternative spells. These are a closely guarded secret, shared only with trusted (or deeply enthralled) allies.

Charm Person, Mass

Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 4, Sor/Wiz 5
Targets: One or more humanoid creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

This spell functions like *charm person*, except that *mass charm person* affects a number of humanoid creatures whose combined HD do not exceed twice your level, or at least one humanoid regardless of HD. If there are more potential targets than you can affect, you choose them one at a time until you choose a humanoid with too many HD. Treat each creature as though individually *charmed* by a separate *charm person* spell.

Dominate Person, Mass

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Bard 7, Sor/Wiz 8
Targets: One or more humanoid creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

This spell functions like *dominate person*, except that *mass dominate person* affects a number of humanoid creatures whose combined HD do not exceed twice your level, or at least one humanoid regardless of HD. If there are more potential targets than you can affect, you choose them one at a time until you choose a humanoid with too many HD. Treat each creature as though individually dominated by a separate *dominate person* spell. You must command each creature separately, and you can receive the sensory input of only one subject at a time.

Geas, Mass Lesser

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Language-Dependent, Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 6, Sor/Wiz 7
Range: Medium (100 ft. +10 ft./level)
Targets: One creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

This spell functions like *lesser geas*, except that it can affect more creatures. The same instructions apply to all targets. All creatures affected must have 7 or fewer Hit Dice and be able to understand you. If you choose a target with too many Hit Dice, it is not affected, and you may not choose another target in its place.

by Christopher Perkins
images provided by Wizards of the Coast

Holier Than Thou

Celestial Monster Classes, Part I

With the release of *Savage Species* last fall, many groups probably saw a sudden influx of monstrous player characters. Full of unmatched, awe-inspiring glory, the celestials presented as monster-leveled creatures in *Savage Species* have some of the greatest play potential of any creature in that book.

The *Book of Exalted Deeds*, out on shelves this month, presents a number of new celestial creatures ready to battle the forces of Hell and the Abyss. Several of these creatures would make excellent player characters. This article presents the monster level progressions and key player information for several of these celestial beings, including the asura, bariaur, hollyphant, leskylor, moon dog, quesar, and rhek. If you have the *Book of Exalted Deeds* already, you're probably already familiar with these new denizens of the Upper Planes. If you don't have it, the article will still provide you with enough information to play one of these celestial characters.

Spells in this article marked with an asterisk (*) are detailed in the *Book of Exalted Deeds*. If you don't have the *Book of Exalted Deeds*, you can substitute the indicated spell with the spell in brackets [ ].

ASURA

You are drawn first to the being's fiery, piercing eyes, then to the long mane of coppery-red hair that crowns

its pale head. Marble-white flesh covers the being's stately frame. Its legs end in birdlike talons with ruby-sharp claws, and wings of crackling flame spring from its narrow shoulders.

The asuras (ah-soo-rahs) serve deities as messengers and heralds. At other times, asuras are sent on missions of retribution to other planes, bringing divine wrath to those who have angered a power of the Upper Planes. Asura are frequently viewed as impudent and violent by other celestials, but the majority of asura take pride in their roles as bringers of "justice."

Asuras and the lawful angels view each other with a great deal of contempt, but as creatures of good, neither group turns to violence or other underhanded methods for dealing with the other.

Making an Asura Character

Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Good)

Asuras have good ability scores, natural armor, combat excellence, and spell-like abilities. They are passionate and powerful beings.

An asura character begins with a fly speed, immunity to fire, two claw attacks, and a racial bonus on saves against certain attack forms. The class has a useful special ability or ability score increase at every character level, making it a truly formidable being for its low Hit Dice.

Racial Traits

Asura characters possess the following racial traits.

- Starting Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Cha. Asuras are forceful and compelling.
- Medium size.
- An asura's base land speed is 30 feet. It also has a fly speed of 60 feet (good).
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Immunity to fire.
- +4 racial bonus on saving throws against petrification, charms, and compulsions.
- Automatic Language: Celestial.
- Favored Class: Asura. The best multiclassing choice for an asura is fighter or cleric, but asuras are competent at any class.

Class Skills

The asura's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the asura monster class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Asuras are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with all types of armor (light, medium, and heavy), and with shields (except tower shields).

Feats: An asura receives one feat at 1st level and additional ones at 4th and 10th level. After 14th level, it gains feats normally according to its character level, as shown on Table 3-2: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits in the *Player's Handbook*. Asuras gain the bonus feat Improved Critical (claw) at 14th level.

Claws: An asura has two claw attacks that are natural weapons dealing the indicated damage plus Strength bonus.

The Asura

Level	Hit Dice	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Skill Points	CR	Special
1st	1d8	+1	+2	+2	+2	(8 + Int mod) x 4	1	Feat, subtypes (chaotic, extraplanar, good), 2 claws 1d6, +2 natural armor
2nd	2d8	+2	+3	+3	+3	8 + Int mod	2	+2 Wis, damage reduction 5/cold iron or evil, *detect good* 1/day, *detect evil* 1/day
3rd	2d8	+2	+3	+3	+3	–	2	+2 Str, +2 Dex, burning wind 1d6 (10-ft. radius), *discern lies* 1/day
4th	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+3	8 + Int mod	3	Feat, +3 natural armor, 2 claws 1d8, spell resistance 11
5th	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+3	–	3	+2 Cha, *detect good* 3/day, *detect evil* 3/day, spell resistance 12
6th	4d8	+4	+4	+4	+4	8 + Int mod	4	+2 Con, burning wind 1d6 (15-ft. radius), immunity to petrification, *magic circle against evil* 1/day
7th	4d8	+4	+4	+4	+4	–	4	+4 natural armor, *polymorph* 1/day, spell resistance 13
8th	5d8	+5	+4	+4	+4	8 + Int mod	5	+2 Wis, *discern lies* 3/day, *detect good* at will, *detect evil* at will, spell resistance 14
9th	5d8	+5	+4	+4	+4	–	5	+2 Str, +2 Dex, burning wind 2d6 (15-ft radius), *holy smite* 1/day
10th	6d8	+6/+1	+5	+5	+5	8 + Int mod	6	Feat, +5 natural armor, *true seeing* 1/day, spell resistance 15
11th	6d8	+6/+1	+5	+5	+5	–	6	+2 Cha, immunity to charms and compulsions, spell resistance 16
12th	7d8	+7/+2	+5	+5	+5	8 + Int mod	7	+2 Con, *true seeing* 3/day, spell resistance 17
13th	7d8	+7/+2	+5	+5	+5	–	7	+6 natural armor, *discern lies* at will, spell resistance 18
14th	8d8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+6	8 + Int mod	8	+2 Str, Bonus feat: Improved Critical (claw), *true seeing* at will, spell resistance 19

Burning Wind (Su): An asura can beat its wings as a standard action and generate a searing wave of heat. At 3rd level, the heat deals 1d6 points of damage and affects all creatures in a 10-foot radius. At 6th level, the radius extends to 15 feet. At 9th level, the damage increases to 2d6 points.

Spell-like Abilities: Starting at 2nd level, an asura can use *detect evil, detect good, discern lies, holy smite, magic circle against evil* (self only), *polymorph* (self only; humanoid forms only), and *true seeing* the indicated number of times per day. The asura's caster level is equal to its Hit Dice from class levels (save DC 10 + spell level + asura's Charisma modifier).

The creature looks a bit like a centaur, but it mixes the forms of human and ram rather than a human and horse. From the waist down, it is indistinguishable from a powerful ram. From the waist up, it looks human, except for two curling horns emerging from the top of its forehead.

Bariaurs roam the plane of Ysgard, protecting its denizens and hunting down evil interlopers to slay in battle. Nomadic and prone to fits of wanderlust, bariaurs travel constantly. Flocks of bariaurs follow one leader who retains power as long as he or she can withstand opponents in a "clash of horns" (a sequence of charge attacks similar to a jousting competition). These celestial creatures love a good competition, especially those that focus on genial fun.

Bariaurs worship Ehlonna and are strict herbivores, although bariaur rangers sometimes eat the meat of woodland creatures they've hunted and slain themselves.

Making a Bariaur Character

Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Good)

Bariaurs are swift, even while armored, and they are capable combatants with or without weapons.

A bariaur character begins as a Medium creature, with two hoof attacks and racial skill bonuses. It gains Strength and grows to Large size before it is able to take levels in other classes.

Racial Traits

Bariaur characters possess the following racial traits.

- Starting Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Con, -2 Cha. Bariaurs are hardy, but they have underdeveloped social skills.
- Medium size. At 4th level, a bariaur's size increases to Large.
- A bariaur's base land speed is 40 feet.
- Quadruped: +4 bonus on checks to resist bull rush and trip attacks. A bariaur has a carrying capacity 1 1/2 times greater than normal for its Strength. It must wear barding instead of normal armor (see the Armor for Unusual Creatures sidebar in Chapter 7: Equipment of the *Player's Handbook*) and cannot wear boots designed for humanoids.
- Hooves: A bariaur's hooves deal 1d4 points of damage (plus Strength modifier) until it becomes Large size.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- +2 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks. Bariaurs have keen senses.
- Automatic Languages: Celestial and Common.
- Favored Class: Bariaur. The best multiclassing choice for a bariaur is ranger, but bariaurs make competent barbarians and fighters as well.

Class Skills

The bariaur's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Survival (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the bariaur monster class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Bariaurs are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with all types of armor (light, medium, and heavy), and with all shields (including tower shields).

Feats: A bariaur receives one feat at 1st level and an additional one at 4th level. After 5th level, it gains feats normally according to its character level, as shown on Table 3-2: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits in the *Player's Handbook*.

Charge (Ex): A bariaur can strike a foe with its horns during a charge. In addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge, this allows the bariaur to make a single gore attack that deals bludgeoning damage (plus the bariaur's Strength modifier). Base damage varies by level (1d6 at 1st level, 1d8 at 2nd level, and 2d6 at 4th level).

Hooves: A bariaur has two hoof attacks that are natural weapons dealing the indicated damage plus Strength bonus.

Large Size: On reaching Large size (at 4th level), a bariaur takes a -1 penalty to Armor Class, a -1 penalty on attack rolls, and a -4 penalty on Hide checks, but gains a +4 bonus on grapple checks. It also occupies a space 10 feet across and gains 10-foot reach.

Spell Resistance (Ex): At 5th level, a bariaur gains spell resistance 11. Its spell

THE BARIAUR

Level	Hit Dice	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Skill Points	CR	Special
1st	1d8	+1	+2	+2	+2	(8 + Int mod) × 4	1	Feat, subtypes (chaotic, extraplanar, good), 2 hooves 1d4, charge 1d6
2nd	2d8	+2	+3	+3	+3	8 + Int mod	2	+2 Str, +2 bonus on Will saves against spells and spell-like abilities, charge 1d8
3rd	2d8	+2	+3	+3	+3	–	2	+2 Str
4th	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+3	8 + Int mod	3	Feat, Large size, 2 hooves 1d6, charge 2d6
5th	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+3	–	3	Spell resistance 11

resistance increases by 1 each time it gains an additional level in any class.

A hollyphant has two forms. Its smaller form can be described as follows:

This creature looks like a small, golden-furred elephant about 2 feet long, with a pair of shining white wings sprouting from its back. Its coat shimmers and gleams, and its eyes dance with a rainbow of colors.

The hollyphant's larger form can be described as follows:

Immense leathery wings sprout from the broad shoulders of this bipedal mastodon. It has bright golden eyes, shaggy black fur covering most of its great bulk, and curved tusks like gleaming scimitars.

Hollyphants aid good deities and often serve as their messengers to mortals. These elephantine celestials can be encountered throughout the Upper Planes, typically on a mission for some god of good or another. Their appearance often fools evil creatures into underestimating their potent magical and psionic power.

Hollyphants have two forms: a Small elephant covered in golden fur, and a Large bipedal mammoth form with deadly tusks, large wings, and black fur. The former form measures around 2 feet long and weighs 60 pounds. The latter version stands 12 feet tall and weighs in at an impressive 1,200 pounds. Hollyphants communicate only telepathically.

Making a Hollyphant Character

Outsider (Extraplanar, Good)

Although they are most often employed as messengers, hollyphants perform a variety of missions and serve in many different capacities. Their ability to telepathically communicate with any intelligent creature enables them to work well within very diverse groups.

Despite their superior mental ability scores, hollyphants are weak at low level and do not gain many of their trademark abilities (such as trumpet and invulnerability) until higher levels. At 8th level, a hollyphant gains the ability to assume its Large form, making it more effective in many combat situations.

Racial Traits

- Starting Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Int, +4 Wis, +2 Cha. Hollyphants are bright, pragmatic, and charming.
- Small Size: +1 bonus to Armor Class, a +1 bonus on attack rolls, +4 bonus on Hide checks, -4 penalty on grapple checks. A hollyphant does not begin with the ability to assume Large form.
- A hollyphant's base land speed is 30 feet (6 squares). It also has a fly speed of 60 feet (good).
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- +4 racial bonus on saves against disease and poison.
- Favored Class: Hollyphant. The best multiclassing choices for a hollyphant are bard, cleric, wizard, and sorcerer.

Class Skills

The hollyphant's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the hollyphant monster class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Hollyphants are proficient with their

The Hollyphant

Level	Hit Dice	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Skill Points	CR	Special
1st	1d8	+1	+2	+2	+2	(8 + Int mod) × 4	1	Feat, subtypes (extraplanar, good), telepathy, gore 1d3
2nd	2d8	+2	+3	+3	+3	8 + Int mod	2	+2 Int, +2 Cha, damage reduction 5/cold iron or evil
3rd	2d8	+2	+3	+3	+3	–	2	*Psionics* 1/day, lesser spell-like abilities 1/day
4th	2d8	+2	+3	+3	+3	–	3	+2 Dex, trumpet 1/day
5th	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+3	8 + Int mod	3	+2 Wis, lesser spell-like abilities 3/day
6th	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+3	–	4	Feat
7th	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+3	–	4	*Psionics* 3/day, trumpet 2/day, *bless* at will, *light* at will, spell resistance 10
8th	4d8	+4	+4	+4	+4	8 + Int mod	5	Alternate form, damage reduction 10/cold iron or evil, spell resistance 11
9th	4d8	+4	+4	+4	+4	–	5	+2 Con, immunity to disease and poison, spell resistance 12
10th	4d8	+4	+4	+4	+4	–	6	+2 Int, trumpet 3/day, invulnerability, spell resistance 13
11th	5d8	+5	+4	+4	+4	8 + Int mod	6	*Psionics* at will, greater spell-like abilities 1/day, spell resistance 14
12th	5d8	+5	+4	+4	+4	–	7	+2 Wis, +2 Cha, spell resistance 15
13th	5d8	+5	+4	+4	+4	–	7	*Greater teleport* 3/day, spell resistance 16
14th	6d8	+6/+1	+5	+5	+5	8 + Int mod	8	Feat, spell resistance 17
15th	6d8	+6/+1	+5	+5	+5	–	8	*Greater teleport* at will, *summon celestial* 1/day, spell resistance 18

natural weapons only. They are not proficient with any other weapons, or with any type of armor or shield.

Feats: A hollyphant receives one feat at 1st level and an additional feat at 6th and 14th level. After 15th level, it gains feats normally according to its character level, as shown on Table 3-2: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits in the *Player's Handbook*.

Gore: A Small hollyphant has a primary gore attack that is a natural weapon dealing 1d3 points of damage plus Strength bonus.

Telepathy (Su): A hollyphant can communicate telepathically with any creature within 60 feet that has a language.

Lesser Spell-like Abilities: At 3rd level, a hollyphant can use the following spell-like abilities each once per day: *bless, cure moderate wounds, light,* and *protection from evil.* At 5th level, it can use each of these abilities three times per day. At 7th level, it can use *bless* and *light* at will. The hollyphant's caster level is equal to its class levels (maximum 15th; save DC 10 + spell level + hollyphant's Charisma modifier).

***Psionics* (Sp):** At 3rd level, a hollyphant can use the following psionic abilities each once per day: *blessed sight** [*prayer*], *detect chaos, detect law, detect poison, detect thoughts, invisibility, know direction, see invisibility,* and *suggestion.* At 7th level, it can use each of these abilities three times per day. At 11th level, it can use these abilities at will. The hollyphant's effective caster level is equal to its Hit Dice from class levels (maximum 6th; save DC 10 + spell level + hollyphant's Charisma modifier).

Trumpet (Su): Starting at 4th level, a hollyphant can issue a blast of sound through its trunk, choosing one of the following effects each time. It can use this ability the indicated number of times per day.

- A 60-foot cone-shaped burst of sound forces creatures in its area to make a successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 class level + hollyphant's Constitution modifier) or take 2d10 points of sonic damage and be stunned for 2 rounds. Creatures that make a successful save take 1d10 points of sonic damage and are stunned for 1 round.
- A 30-foot cone-shaped burst of sun sparkles. These motes of holy power deal 1d8 points of damage per hollyphant level (maximum 8d8) to evil outsiders, undead, and any other creature vulnerable to holy water. A successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 class level + hollyphant's Charisma modifier) reduces the damage by half.

Spell Resistance (Ex): Starting at 7th level, a hollyphant gains spell resistance equal to 3 + class level. This spell resistance increases by +4 against evil spells and spells cast by evil outsiders.

Alternate Form (Su): At 8th level, a hollyphant gains the ability to change into a Large form. It can shift between its Small and Large forms as a standard action. In Large form, it loses the benefits of its invulnerability ability (see below). In Large form, a hollyphant takes a -1 penalty to AC, a -1 penalty on attack rolls, and -4 penalty on Hide checks, but its Strength increases by +12 and it gains a +4 bonus on grapple checks. It also occupies a space 10 feet across and gains a 10-foot reach.

A hollyphant in Large form gains two primary slam attacks that are natural weapons dealing 1d8 points of damage plus Strength bonus. Its gore becomes a secondary attack that deals 2d6 points of damage plus 1/2 Strength bonus.

A hollyphant remains in one form until it chooses to assume the other form. A change in form cannot be dispelled, nor does the hollyphant revert to any particular form when killed. A *true seeing* spell, however, reveals both forms simultaneously.

Immunities: At 9th level, a hollyphant gains immunity to disease and poison.

Invulnerability (Su): At 10th level, a Small hollyphant's shimmering coat protects it as a continuous *globe of invulnerability,* but only the hollyphant is warded. In Large form, the hollyphant loses this ability.

Greater Spell-like Abilities: At 11th level, a hollyphant can use the following spell-like abilities each once per day: *banishment, flame strike, greater teleport* (self and up to 20 pounds of objects only), *heal,* and *raise dead.* At 13th level, it can use *greater teleport* three times per day. At 15th level, it

The Lesky Lor

Level	Hit Dice	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Skill Points	CR	Special
1st	1d10	+1	+2	+2	+0	(2 + Int mod) x 4	1	Feat, 2 claws 1d4, bite 1d6, 2 rakes 1d4
2nd	2d10	+2	+3	+3	+0	2 + Int mod	2	+2 Cha, frost breath 1d6, lesser spell-like abilities 1/day
3rd	2d10	+2	+3	+3	+0	–	2	+2 Str, 2 claws 1d6, bite 1d8, 2 rakes 1d6
4th	3d10	+3	+3	+3	+1	2 + Int mod	3	Feat, frost breath 2d6
5th	3d10	+3	+3	+3	+1	–	3	+2 Int, +2 Wis, improved grab, resistance to cold 15
6th	3d10	+3	+3	+3	+1	–	4	+2 Str, +2 Con
7th	4d10	+4	+4	+4	+1	2 + Int mod	4	Large size, 2 claws 1d8, bite 1d8, 2 rakes 1d8, frost breath 3d6
8th	4d10	+4	+4	+4	+1	–	5	Pounce, greater spell-like abilities 1/day
9th	5d10	+5	+4	+4	+1	2 + Int mod	5	+2 Str, immunity to cold
10th	5d10	+5	+4	+4	+1	–	6	+2 Con, +2 Int, golden ice
11th	5d10	+5	+4	+4	+1	–	6	+2 Str, spd 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)
12th	6d10	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	2 + Int mod	7	+2 Str, +2 Cha, feat

can use *greater teleport* at will. The hollyphant's caster level is equal to its class levels (maximum 15th; save DC 10 + spell level + hollyphant's Charisma modifier).

***Summon Celestial* (Sp):** At 15th level, a hollyphant can attempt to summon another hollyphant, an asura, or an avoral guardinal with a 45% chance of success once per day. The summoned creature automatically returns whence it came after 1 hour. A hollyphant that has just been summoned cannot use its own summon ability for 1 hour.

LESKYLOR

This great tigerlike feline has snowy-white fur with bands of pale blue, icy-blue eyes that flicker with intelligence, and white-feathered wings. Its pearly white claws and teeth are long and razor-sharp.

Native to the plane of Eronia, the second layer of Elysium, Leskylors are solitary creatures that occasionally form an alliance with champions of good, serving as mounts, companions, or both. Leskylors love the cold winters in the jagged mountains and bitter winds of Eronia, and they spend most of the summers hibernating in chill mountain caves.

Leskylors measure 10 feet long, have a 30-foot wingspan, and weigh 700 pounds.

Making a Leskylor Character

Magical Beast

Skilled hunters and vicious combatants, leskylors make excellent warriors and stalwart companions in the fight against evil. Although they prefer cold climes, they can adapt to other environments.

A leskylor character begins play as a Medium creature with resistance to cold 10, a number of natural attacks, and the ability to fly. Later it grows to Large size and gains a breath weapon and substantial combat power, as well as spell-like abilities.

Racial Traits

- Starting Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Str, +2 Con. Leskylors are strong and hardy creatures.
- Medium size. At 4th level, a leskylor's size increases to Large.
- A leskylor's base land speed is 30 feet (6 squares). It also has a fly speed of 60 feet (good). These speeds increase as it gains levels.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Resistance to cold 10.
- Automatic Languages: Celestial, Draconic, and Leskylor.
- Favored Class: Leskylor. The best multiclassing choice for a leskylor is fighter.

Class Skills

The leskylor's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Hide (Dex), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the leskylor monster class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Leskylors are proficient with their natural weapons only. They are not proficient with any other weapons, or with any type of armor or shield.

Feats: A leskylor receives one feat at 1st level and an additional feat at 4th and 12th level. After 12th level, it gains feats normally according to its character level, as shown on Table 3-2: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits in the *Player's Handbook*.

Claws: A leskylor has two claw attacks that are natural weapons dealing the indicated amount of damage plus Strength bonus.

Bite: A leskylor has a bite attack that is a natural weapon dealing the indicated amount of damage plus 1/2 Strength bonus.

Rake (Ex): A leskylor has two rake attacks that are natural weapons made at the leskylor's highest attack bonus and dealing the indicated amount of damage plus 1/2 Strength bonus.

Frost Breath (Su): Starting at 2nd level, a leskylor can breathe a cone-shaped burst of frost, 30 feet long, three times per day, dealing the indicated amount of cold damage. A successful Reflex save (DC 10 + 1/2 class level + leskylor's Constitution modifier) reduces the damage by half.

Lesser Spell-like Abilities: At 2nd level, a leskylor can use the following spell-like abilities each once per day: *blessed sight** [*prayer*], *cause fear*, *eyes of the avoral** [*protection from evil*], and *vision of heaven** [*doom*]. The leskylor's caster level is equal to its Hit Dice from class levels (maximum 6th; save DC 10 + spell level + leskylor's Wisdom modifier).

Improved Grab (Ex): A leskylor gains this ability at 5th level. To use this ability, the leskylor must hit with a claw or bite attack. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake.

Greater Spell-like Abilities: At 8th level, the leskylor can use the following spell-like abilities each once per day: *cure moderate wounds*, *hold person*, and *obscuring mist*. The leskylor's caster level is equal to its Hit Dice from class levels (maximum 6th; save DC 10 + spell level + leskylor's Wisdom modifier).

Large Size: On reaching Large size (at 7th level), a leskylor takes a -1 penalty to AC, a -1 penalty on attack rolls, and -4 penalty on Hide checks, but gains a +4 bonus on grapple checks. The leskylor also occupies a space 10 feet across and gains a 10-foot reach.

Pounce (Ex): Starting at 8th level, if a leskylor charges a foe, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Golden Ice (Su): Any creature wounded by a leskylor's claw or bite attack must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or suffer the effects of the golden ice ravage. Golden ice is a crystalline substance that is cold to the touch, but does not melt except at infernally high temperatures. A creature that comes into contact with golden ice and fails its save takes initial damage of 1d6 points of Dexterity damage, and secondary damage 1 minute later of 2d6 points of Dexterity damage.

MOON DOG

This man-sized mastiff strongly resembles a wolf hound with a shaggy, deep-black coat. It bears some striking humanlike characteristics, including front paws with opposable digits. Its haunting eyes resemble lustrous amber orbs.

Moon dogs have frequently been confused with the evil yeth hounds, but these creatures are actually natives of Elysium and powerful champions of good. They prefer to walk on all fours, but moon dogs can walk (at half speed) on their hind legs and their front paws even have some capacity for manipulation.

Moon dogs are roughly the size of a large man in body mass. Although they can speak, they prefer to communicate telepathically.

Making a Moon Dog Character

Outsider (Extraplanar, Good)

As devoted warriors of good, moon dogs come to the aid of other good-aligned champions in need. Thus, they often become involved with bands of crusading adventurers.

A moon dog character begins play with modest ability score bonuses, keen senses, and racial bonuses to saving throws. As it advances in level, its ability scores increase, and it gains powerful spell-like and supernatural abilities.

Racial Traits

- Starting Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Str, +2 Wis. Moon dogs are powerful and wise.
- Medium size.
- Speed: A moon dog's base land speed is 30 feet (6 squares). This speed increases as it gains levels.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Keen Senses: A moon dog sees four times as well as a human in low-light conditions and twice as well in normal light.
- Luck: +2 luck bonus on all saving throws.
- +4 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.
- Automatic Languages: Celestial, Common, and Infernal.
- Favored Class: Moon dog. The best multiclassing choice for a moon dog is fighter, although ranger is another good option.

Class Skills

The moon dog's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the moon dog monster class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Moon dogs are proficient with all simple weapons and all light martial weapons. They are not proficient with any type of armor or shield.

Feats: A moon dog receives 1 feat at 1st level and an additional feat at 4th, 10th, and 16th level. After 17th level, it gains feats normally according to its character level, as shown on Table 3-2: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits in the *Player's Handbook*.

Bite: A moon dog has a bite attack that is a natural weapon dealing 1d8 points of damage plus Strength bonus.

Innate Spell-Like Abilities: Moon dogs have acute magical perception. They

The Moondog

Level	Hit Dice	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Skill Points	CR	Special
1st	1d8	+1	+2	+2	+2	(8 + Int mod) x 4	1	Feat, subtypes (extraplanar, good), bite 1d8, innate spell-like abilities, *speak with canines*, telepathy
2nd	2d8	+2	+3	+3	+3	8 + Int mod	2	+2 Dex, evasion, damage reduction 5/cold iron or evil
3rd	2d8	+2	+3	+3	+3	–	3	Scent, lesser spell-like abilities 1/day
4th	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+3	8 + Int mod	3	+2 Str, +2 Wis, feat, spd 40 ft.
5th	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+3	–	4	Soothing ministrations, lesser spell-like abilities 3/day, spell resistance 11
6th	4d8	+4	+4	+4	+4	8 + Int mod	5	Improved evasion, spell resistance 12
7th	4d8	+4	+4	+4	+4	–	5	+2 Cha, bay, *dancing lights, darkness, light,* and *fog cloud* at will, spell resistance 13
8th	5d8	+5	+4	+4	+4	8 + Int mod	6	+2 Dex, spd 50 ft., bark, spell resistance 14
9th	5d8	+5	+4	+4	+4	–	7	Damage reduction 10/cold iron or evil, spell resistance 15
10th	6d8	+6/+1	+5	+5	+5	8 + Int mod	7	+2 Int, feat, shadow pattern, spell resistance 16
11th	6d8	+6/+1	+5	+5	+5	–	8	Greater spell-like abilities 1/day, spell resistance 17
12th	7d8	+7/+2	+5	+5	+5	8 + Int mod	9	+2 Cha, howl, spell resistance 18
13th	7d8	+7/+2	+5	+5	+5	–	9	+2 Con, spell resistance 19
14th	8d8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+6	8 + Int mod	10	*Astral projection, ethereal jaunt, greater invisibility,* and *nondetection* 3/day, spell resistance 20
15th	8d8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+6	–	11	Whine, spell resistance 21
16th	9d8	+9/+4	+6	+6	+6	8 + Int mod	11	+2 Str, +2 Wis, feat, spell resistance 22
17th	9d8	+9/+4	+6	+6	+6	–	12	+2 Int, +2 Cha, *astral projection, ethereal jaunt, greater invisibility,* and *nondetection* at will, spell resistance 23

possess the following spell-like abilities, which are always active: *arcane sight, blessed sight** [*prayer*], *detect snares and pits,* and *see invisibility.* The moon dog's caster level is equal to its class level (maximum 12th).

***Speak with Canines* (Sp):** A moon dog can use *speak with animals* (as cast by a 12th-level druid) to communicate with any canine animal, including dogs and wolves. This ability functions at will.

Telepathy (Su): A moon dog can communicate telepathically with any creature within 50 feet that has a language.

Evasion (Ex): At 2nd level or higher, if the moon dog makes a Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, it instead takes no damage. Evasion can be used only if the moon dog is wearing light armor or no armor. A helpless moon dog does not gain the benefit of evasion.

Lesser Spell-like Abilities: At 3rd level, a moon dog can use the following spell-like abilities each once per day: *disguise self, dancing lights, darkness, light, mirror image,* and *fog cloud.* At 5th level, it can use each of these abilities three times per day. At 7th level, it can use each of these abilities except *disguise self* and *mirror image* at will. The moon dog's caster level is equal to its class level (maximum 12th; save DC 10 + spell level + moon dog's Charisma modifier).

Scent (Ex): A moon dog of 3rd level or higher can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Soothing Ministrations (Su): By licking a wound, a moon dog of 5th level or higher can create any of the following effects, one time each per individual per day: *cure light wounds, remove disease,* and *slow poison.* The caster level is the moon dog's class level (maximum 12th).

Spell Resistance (Ex): Starting at 5th level, a moon dog gains spell resistance equal to 6 + class level.

Improved Evasion (Ex): The moon dog gains this ability at 6th level. This works like evasion, except that while the moon dog still takes no damage on a successful Reflex saving throw, henceforth it takes only half damage on a failed save. A helpless moon dog does not gain the benefit of improved evasion.

Bay (Su): Starting at 7th level, a moon dog can bay as a standard action. Its baying has the effect of a *fear* spell from a caster of the moon dog's class level (maximum 12th; save DC 10 + 1/2 class level + moon dog's Charisma modifier). It affects only evil creatures within an 80-foot radius of the moon dog. A creature that makes a successful Will save is immune to that particular moon dog's baying for 24 hours. This is a sonic, mind-affecting effect.

Bark (Su): Beginning at 8th level, a moon dog can bark as a standard action and create a *dispel evil* effect from a caster of the moon dog's class level (maximum 12th).

Shadow Pattern (Su): When in shadowy light, a moon dog of 10th level or higher can move itself and manipulate the shadows around itself to create a special shadow pattern. Creating the pattern is a full-round action, and the pattern lasts only as long as the moon dog concentrates to maintain it, plus an additional 2 rounds. The pattern emanates in a 50-foot radius around the moon dog. Evil creatures within this effect are fascinated as though by a *hypnotic pattern* spell from a 10th-level caster (Will save DC 10 + 1/2 class level + moon dog's Charisma modifier). Good creatures within the effect are warded by a *protection from evil* effect and a *remove fear* effect for the duration of the pattern.

Greater Spell-like Abilities: At 11th level, a moon dog can use the following spell-like abilities each once per day: *astral projection* (self only), *ethereal jaunt, greater invisibility, nondetection,* and *greater shadow conjuration.* At 14th level, it can use all these abilities except *greater shadow conjuration* three times per day. At 17th level, it can use all these abilities except *greater shadow conjuration* at will. The moon dog's caster level is equal to its class level (maximum 12th; save DC 10 + spell level + moon dog's Charisma modifier).

Howl (Su): At 12th level, when a moon dog howls, evil creatures within 40 feet of the moon dog take 1d4+4 points of damage per round, in addition to the fear effect of its baying. Evil extraplanar creatures within 40 feet of a howling moon dog are targeted by a *dismissal* effect from a 12th-level caster (save DC 15 + moon dog's Charisma modifier). If more than one moon dog is howling within 40 feet of such a creature, the creature receives only one saving throw, and the effective caster level of the *dismissal* effect is increased by +2 for each additional moon dog beyond the first.

Whine (Su): Starting at 15th level, a moon dog can whine as a standard action to automatically dispel any illusion effect within 50 feet.

This gaunt humanoid creature has blue skin and tall white hair. A slender torso joins two graceful arms, powerful legs, and a noble head. This form is obscured, however, by the incredible amounts of radiant energy emanating from the creature.

Constructs crafted by angels to serve as guardians of celestial treasures, quesars shine with a brilliance that scorches and burns creatures of evil. In an act of good will, their creators gave quesars free will, and the constructs consequently refused a life of slavery. Quesars now serve as allies to their good creators, living an independent, isolated lifestyle.

Quesars stand 6 feet tall and weigh 160 pounds.

Making a Quesar Character

Construct (Extraplanar)

Quesars scour the Upper Planes in search of a purpose. A quesar's bonus hit points, construct traits, and damage reduction make it especially resilient, particularly at low levels, but it suffers from poor saves and a lack of skills and feats. Its fast healing ability obviates any need for conventional healing; however, the ability functions only in daylight, making quesars timid dungeon explorers.

Racial Traits

- Starting Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Dex, -2 Int. Quesars were designed to be agile, but not especially resourceful. As a construct, a quesar has no Constitution score.
- Medium size.

THE QUESAR

Level	Hit Dice	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Skill Points	CR	Special
1st	1d10	+0	+0	+0	+0	—	1	Extraplanar subtype, energy halo, fast healing 1, slam 1d6 plus 1d6 energy, damage reduction 5/adamantine
2nd	2d10	+1	+0	+0	+0	—	1	Spd 40 ft.
3rd	3d10	+2	+1	+1	+1	—	2	Blinding radiance, resistance to electricity 10 and fire 10
4th	3d10	+2	+1	+1	+1	—	2	+2 Dex
5th	4d10	+3	+1	+1	+1	—	3	Fast healing 2
6th	4d10	+3	+1	+1	+1	—	3	Searing burst 1/day, resistance to electricity 15 and fire 15
7th	4d10	+3	+1	+1	+1	—	4	Consuming brilliance 1/day
8th	5d10	+3	+1	+1	+1	—	4	Spd 50 ft., searing burst 2/day
9th	5d10	+3	+1	+1	+1	—	5	Fast healing 3, damage reduction 10/adamantine, immunity to electricity and fire
10th	6d10	+4	+2	+2	+2	—	5	Searing burst 3/day, spell resistance 11
11th	6d10	+4	+2	+2	+2	—	5	Consuming brilliance 2/day, spell resistance 12
12th	6d10	+4	+2	+2	+2	—	6	+2 Dex, searing burst 4/day, spell resistance 13
13th	7d10	+5	+2	+2	+2	—	6	Fast healing 4, spell resistance 14
14th	7d10	+5	+2	+2	+2	—	6	Spd 60 ft., searing burst 5/day, spell resistance
15th	8d10	+6/+1	+2	+2	+2	—	7	Consuming brilliance 3/day, spell resistance 16
16th	8d10	+6/+1	+2	+2	+2	—	7	Searing burst 6/day, spell resistance 17
17th	8d10	+6/+1	+2	+2	+2	—	7	Fast healing 5, spell resistance 18

- A quesar's base land speed is 30 feet (6 squares). This speed increases as it gains levels.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Low-light vision.
- Bonus Hit Points: As a Medium construct, a quesar receives 10 extra hit points.
- Resistance to electricity 5 and fire 5.
- Construct Traits: A quesar has immunity to poison, magic sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects), and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or energy drain. Cannot heal damage, but can be repaired.
- Automatic Language: Celestial.
- Favored Class: Quesar.

Class Skills

As a construct, a quesar receives no class skills or skill points. If a quesar multiclasses after 17th level, it receives skill points normally for its other classes.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the quesar monster class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Quesars are proficient only with their natural slam attack. They are not proficient with any other weapons, or with any type of armor or shield.

Feats: As a construct, a quesar receives no feats. If a quesar multiclasses after 17th level, it gains feats normally for its other classes.

Slam: A quesar has two slam attacks that are natural weapons dealing 1d6 points of damage plus Strength bonus, plus 1d6 additional points of energy damage.

Energy Halo (Su): At all times, a quesar is surrounded by a radiant glow that sheds bright light to a radius of 20 feet and shadowy illumination to 40 feet.

Fast Healing (Ex): A quesar regains lost hit points at the indicated rate per round as long as it is in daylight (including spells such as *daylight*, but not its own energy halo). It continues regaining hit points even when destroyed, as long as it remains in daylight. Fast healing does not allow the quesar to regrow or reattach lost body parts.

Blinding Radiance (Su): At will, a quesar of 3rd level or higher can increase the brightness of its energy halo so that it radiates brilliant light to a radius of 120 feet (and shadowy illumination to 240 feet). Any creature within this radius must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 class level + quesar's Charisma modifier) or be blinded for 1d10 rounds. Creatures with light sensitivity take double the normal penalties in this brilliant light.

Searing Burst (Su): Starting at 6th level, after a quesar has had blinding radiance active for at least 1 round, it can increase its intensity still more, creating an instantaneous burst of searing energy similar in effect to a *sunburst* spell. All creatures within 30 feet of the quesar take 6d6 points of damage; a successful Reflex save (DC 10 + 1/2 class level + quesar's Charisma modifier) reduces the damage by half. A quesar can use a searing burst the indicated number of times per day.

Consuming Brilliance (Su): A quesar of 7th level or higher can create an instantaneous burst of energy so intense that it reduces all creatures and objects within 15 feet to a trace of fine dust, dealing 2d6 points of damage per class level (maximum 22d6), as the *disintegrate* spell. On a successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 class level + quesar's Charisma modifier), a creature instead takes 5d6 points of damage. The quesar can use this ability the indicated number of times per day.

Spell Resistance (Ex): Starting at 10th level, a quesar gains spell resistance equal to 1 + class level.

THE RHEK

Level	Hit Dice	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Skill Points	CR	Special
1st	1d8	+1	+2	+2	+0	(2 + Int mod) x 4	1	Extraplanar subtype, feat, gore 1d6, mighty charge, *detect chaos* 1/day
2nd	2d8	+2	+3	+3	+0	2 + Int mod	2	+2 Str, smite chaos 1/day
3rd	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+1	2 + Int mod	2	+2 Con, feat
4th	3d8	+3	+3	+3	+1	–	3	+2 Str, *detect chaos* 2/day
5th	4d8	+4	+4	+4	+1	2 + Int mod	3	+2 Con, gore 1d8, smite chaos 2/day
6th	4d8	+4	+4	+4	+1	–	4	+2 Str, +2 Wis
7th	5d8	+5	+4	+4	+1	2 + Int mod	4	+2 Con, *detect chaos* 3/day
8th	5d8	+5	+4	+4	+1	–	4	+2 Cha, smite chaos 3/day

This hulking humanoid combines the features of a human and a rhinoceros. Gleaming armor covers its leathery, pale-gray hide, and a great black horn juts from the middle of its forehead. Clutching a wicked halberd, it fixes its beady black eyes on you, as if to discern your intentions.

Rheks live on Arcadia, although they did not originate on that plane. Originally denizens of the Material Plane, they willingly relocated to Arcadia at the request of members of the Harmonium, a powerful planar faction. This exodus to Arcadia first occurred just after Menausus, once the third layer of Arcadia, dissolved into the plane of Mechanus. The rheks were instrumental in keeping order during that catastrophe.

Rheks strive to make order out of chaos and destroy evil wherever it is encountered. Strong believers in preserving harmony, rheks have little patience for surprises and pay meticulous attention to keeping everything in its proper place. Although willing to keep the peace through force, they are not bloodthirsty.

Rheks stand 7 feet tall and weigh 350 pounds.

Making a Rhek Character

Monstrous Humanoid (Extraplanar)

Rheks are champions of law and order. Although encountered primarily on Arcadia, they can be found battling chaos and evil on other planes as well. Few are surprised by the rhek's physical strength and intestinal fortitude, but many are taken aback by its good sense and natural charisma.

A rhek character begins play with good ability score adjustments and the ability to stabilize automatically. Their physical ability scores increase at every level, and they gain improved combat strength and special abilities.

Racial Traits

- Starting Ability Score Adjustments: +2 Str, +2 Con, +2 Wis, +2 Cha. Rheks are strong, resilient, wise, and intimidating.
- Medium size.
- A rhek's base land speed is 30 feet.
- Darkvision out to 60 feet.
- Instant Stability: Rheks have redundant internal organs and rapidly congealing blood. They automatically stabilize when reduced to -1 to -9 hit points; however, they still die when reduced to -10 hit points.
- Automatic Languages: Celestial and Common.
- Favored Class: Rhek. The best multiclassing choice for a rhek is monk or paladin.

Class Skills

The rhek's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Search (Int), and Spot (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the rhek monster class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Rheks are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with all armor, and with all shields (including tower shields).

Feats: A rhek receives 1 feat at 1st level and an additional feat at 3rd level. After 7th level, it gains feats normally according to its character level, as shown on Table 3-2: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits in the *Player's Handbook*.

Gore: A rhek has a gore attack that is a natural weapon dealing the indicated damage plus times Strength bonus as a primary attack, or plus 1/2 Strength bonus if used in conjunction with a weapon attack.

***Detect Chaos* (Sp):** A rhek can *detect chaos* the indicated number of times per day. Its caster level equals its class level (maximum 5th).

Mighty Charge (Ex): A rhek typically begins a battle by charging at an opponent, lowering its head to bring its mighty horn into play. In addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge, this allows the rhek to make a single gore attack that deals double damage.

Smite Chaos (Su): Starting at 2nd level, a rhek can make a normal attack against a chaotic foe with a bonus on the attack roll equal to the rhek's Charisma modifier. If the attack hits, the rhek deals additional damage equal to its Hit Dice from class levels (maximum +5). A rhek can smite chaos the indicated number of times per day. D

PRAYERS OF THE FROSTMAIDEN
The Spells of Auril

by Thomas M. Costa · illustrated by Beth Trott

It appeared suddenly in the wilds of Icewind Dale, a book with blue pages that felt as if they were made of ice. The man holding the book was tired and on the run. By the time he stumbled into the busy market of Ten Towns, he was exhausted, frantic, and crazed. It was there that two pursuing ice devils caught him. In an instant, the gelugons ripped the man apart and snatched the book away; by the next they were gone.

In their wake the man lay dying, raving weakly about the Winter of Death. He spoke of the *Revelations of the Icedawn*, a holy book of Auril, the Frostmaiden, said to contain her most chilling prayers. He spoke of the book as the gift of Iyraclea, the Ice Queen, and of a coming winter that would entomb the North in ice and snow like a coffin.

The tale of the man's death spread to the archmage Khelben "Blackstaff" Arunsun, who took the news seriously enough to send several Moonstars to investigate. They were found not a month ago, their hearts frozen and shattered within their sundered bodies. Its location now unknown, the madman's copy of the *Revelations of the Icedawn* is rumored to hold the most prized prayers of Auril's faith. Were one to read it, he would find that it holds the spells detailed here.

Auril's Flowers

Transmutation [Cold]
Level: Clr 6, Drd 5
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Area: 30-ft. radius burst
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Spell Resistance: No

This spell causes moisture in the ground at a point you designate to freeze into a pingo, a mound of solid ice covered by a layer of soil, and burst violently through the surface. This flings dangerous ice shards and smalls stones throughout the area, turning the surface of the ground into dense rubble (see page 90 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*.) The shards and stones deal 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 15d6). Half the damage is cold damage. The origin point of the spell must be on the ground. If there is no source of moisture in the ground to a depth of 3 feet, such as sand in a desert or solid stone, the spell has no effect.

Cold Fire

Transmutation [Cold]
Level: Clr 3, Drd 2
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One fire source (up to a 20-ft. cube) or one creature
Duration: 1 minute/level (D), or instantaneous (creature)
Saving Throw: No (fire source) or Fortitude half (creature)
Spell Resistance: No (fire source) or Yes (creature)

You are able to change the normal flames of a fire (that lasts for more than 1 round) into cold flames. Affected flames inflict cold damage on creatures that come into contact with them. The spell can also affect magical fires such as those generated by a *wall of fire*, providing the affected fire is small enough. *Cold fire* flames are blue and white for the duration of the spell.

If the target is a creature with the fire subtype or cold vulnerability, the spell causes 1d6 points of cold damage per two caster levels (maximum 5d6) to the creature, but has no further effect.

Cold Snap

Transmutation [Cold]
Level: Clr 6, Drd 5
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: 1 mile
Area: One-mile-radius circle, centered on caster
Duration: 2d4 hours
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell causes a powerful cold front to form, lowering the temperature in the affected area by 5° F per caster level (maximum change of 50° F), to a maximum low of -20° F (see Cold Dangers on

page 302 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.) Three or more hours of temperatures below 30° F can damage or destroy any fragile flora, such as fruit, in the area of effect.

A druid casting this spell doubles the duration and affects a circle with a 2-mile radius.

Corona of Cold

Evocation [Cold]
Level: Clr 4, Drd 4
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Area: 10-ft.-radius emanation centered on you
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

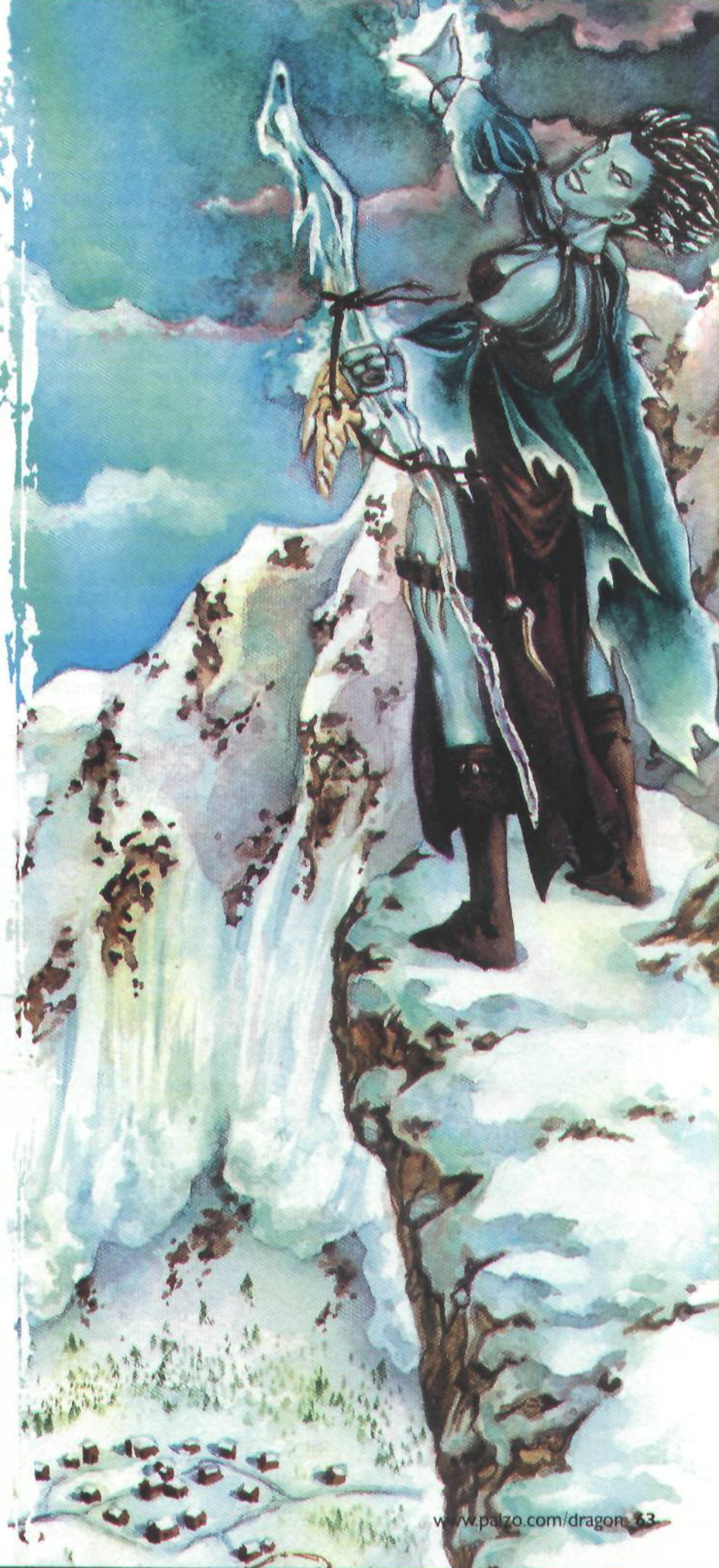
The caster is surrounded by a protective aura of cold that also causes damage to others within its radius. The spell absorbs the first 5 points, +1 point per caster level, of heat or fire damage the caster would take each round.

The spell also causes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage due to cold each round to all other creatures within the corona. A successful save prevents the damage caused by the spell that round. Creatures damaged by the spell shiver uncontrollably, suffering a -2 penalty to their Strength and Dexterity for as long as they remain within the area; these penalties do not stack with consecutive rounds of damage or additional *corona of cold* spells.

Freeze

Conjuration (Creation) [Cold]
Level: Clr 5, Drd 4
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: Ray
Duration: 1 round/2 levels
Saving Throw: Reflex partial
Spell Resistance: Yes

A thin white ray streaks from your outstretched hand. You must make a successful ranged touch attack with the ray to deal damage to the target. A target struck takes 1d6 points of cold damage +1 point per two caster levels. A creature struck must succeed at a Reflex save or be encased in a 5-inch-thick sheath of ice and be immobilized. A creature encased in ice suffers 1d6



FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

If you are using the Forgotten Realms, but your heroes do not follow Auril, some of these spells might be available to the faithful of Ulutiu or other gods, such as Silvanus.

On other worlds you can grant these spells through another god of winter, or to the winter cult of a god of weather or nature. Alternatively, the spells could be sacred to tundra-dwelling druids, found in the psalms of a long-dead god, or even be in the hands of a wizard attempting to research similar arcane spells.

In the case of assigning them to alternate gods, remember that you might need to tweak some of the spells; for instance, *ice axe* might be renamed *ice spear* to correspond with a deity's favored weapon.

FOR CLERICS OF AURIL

Auril is a fickle and evil goddess, whose frozen heart is untouched by any hint of warmth. She commands her faithful to blanket the land in snow and put chill in every bone. Toward that end, she has taught her clergy many spells. Several are unique, some are similar to known druid and wizard spells (with their energy type changed to cold), and still others resemble nonelemental spells with minor descriptive changes.

If the DM allows, clerics of Auril also may choose the Weather domain (from *Deities and Demigods*, page 215) and/or the Winter domain (from *Dragon Magazine* #290, page 50) instead of the Storm and/or Air domains.

Here are some examples of altering spells specifically for Aurilian clerics, in order to add more flavor to a campaign:

ORIGINAL	NEW NAME	SPELL LEVEL
Burning hands	*Frost fingers*	*Clr 2*
Chill metal		*Clr 3*
Fire shield	*Chill shield*	*Clr 4*
Cone of cold		*Clr 6*
Fire trap	*Ice trap*	*Clr 3*
Flame blade	*Frost blade*	*Clr 3*
Flame strike	*Cold strike*	*Clr 5*
Flaming sphere	*Cold sphere*	*Clr 3*
Flesh to stone	*Flesh to ice*	*Clr 7*
Grease	*Ice patch*	*Clr 2*
Ice storm		*Clr 5*
Polar ray		*Clr 9*
Ray of frost		*Clr 1*
Shocking grasp	*Cold hand*	*Clr 2*
Simulacrum		*Clr 8*
Sleet storm		*Clr 4*
Stone to flesh	*Ice to flesh*	*Clr 7*
Wall of ice		*Clr 5*

points of cold damage +1 point per two caster levels each round until freed. A target encased in ice is aware and breathes normally but cannot speak or move other than to attempt to escape by making a Strength check (see below). It may still execute purely mental actions, such as using a spell-like ability. A spellcaster may cast a spell with no verbal or somatic component so long as the spell lacks a focus or material component, or the material component, focus, or divine focus is already in the spellcaster's hand.

Note that the ice blocks line of effect. A winged creature cannot flap its wings and falls. A swimmer can't swim but, as ice floats, the encased swimmer will rise to the surface and bob about.

A DC 26 Strength check breaks the ice, freeing the encased creature. A total of 15 points of damage destroys enough of the ice to free the creature. When the ice has suffered at least 7 points of damage, the DC to break it drops by 2. When the duration of the spell expires, the ice melts and the encased creature is freed. Damage that would harm the creature must first deal enough damage to destroy the ice before the creature suffers damage, and damage dealt to the ice is subtracted from damage that would be dealt to the creature.

Frost Breath

Evocation [Cold]
Level: Clr 3, Drd 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)
Area: Cone
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Spell Resistance: Yes

You breathe a cone of intense cold at your foes. The spell causes 1d4 points of cold damage per two caster levels (maximum 5d4). In addition, all creatures damaged by the *frost breath* that fail their Reflex save are dazed for 1 round by the sudden shock of cold.

Material Component: Three drops of water or fragments of ice (which are held in a cupped palm and blown toward the target).

Frostbite

Evocation [Cold]
Level: Clr 4, Drd 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell inflicts intense cold damage upon the target, causing numbness, hypothermia, and frostbite as if the target had been exposed for a prolonged time to freezing temperatures. The target suffers 1d6 points of cold damage per two caster levels (maximum 10d6) and 1d4 points of nonlethal damage due to cold per two caster levels (maximum 10d4). The target may make a Fortitude save to negate the nonlethal damage. If the target suffers the nonlethal damage, the target becomes fatigued.

Heat Leech

Necromancy [Cold]
Level: Clr 8
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Targets: Living creatures, no two of which may be more than 30 ft. apart
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The heat is drained from all living creatures except you within the affected area, which heals and empowers you. All affected living creatures take 1d4 points of cold damage per four caster levels (maximum 5d4). The caster gains hit points equal to the damage dealt to all the victims. No single victim can contribute more than its current hit points +10. Absorbed hit points first heal the caster of damage currently sustained. Remaining absorbed hit points become temporary hit points that last 1 minute per level.

Ice Axe

Evocation [Cold]
Level: Clr 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: 0 ft.
Effect: Battleaxe-like swirling ice
Duration: 1 min./level (D)

Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell creates a battleaxe-shaped formation of jagged, fast-swirling ice shards. You attack with *ice axe* as if you are proficient. The axe deals 1d8 points +1 point per two caster levels (maximum +10) of cold damage and 1d8 points of slashing damage with a successful hit. You cannot be disarmed of the *ice axe* nor can it be sundered. Since the axe is virtually weightless, your Strength modifier does not apply to attack or damage rolls. The *ice axe* is magic for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction. Damage reduction may apply to the *ice axe*'s slashing damage, but it does not affect the cold damage the *ice axe* deals. If you choose to hold something other than the *ice axe* in your hand or use the hand in some other way, you may, but the *ice axe* vanishes until the hand is empty again.

Material Component: A shard of ice, glass, or crystal.

Ice Gauntlet

Evocation [Cold]
Level: Clr 1
Components: V, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

This spell creates a large bristling ball of rock-hard ice spikes around one of the caster's fists. The caster may attack with her fist in all respects as if she were wearing a *+1 spiked gauntlet*. The *+1 spiked gauntlet* deals normal damage for the caster's size plus 1 point of cold damage. Damage reduction may apply to the *ice gauntlet's* damage, but it does not affect the cold damage the *ice gauntlet* deals. If the caster suffers any amount of fire damage, the *ice gauntlet* melts and the spell ends.

Note that this spell effect precludes the use of one hand for casting spells with a somatic component (so long as nothing if held in the caster's other hand, such spells can still be cast), and might make other tasks requiring two hands, such as climbing, more difficult or even impossible.

Snowshoes

Transmutation
Level: Clr 1, Drd 0, Rgr 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 hour/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The affected creature can walk lightly over ice without having its speed reduced. The affected creature gains a +5 bonus to any Balance check or Reflex saving throw to walk on ice and snow without slipping and falling, avoid cracking ice they walk over, or to avoid falling through cracked ice. In addition, affected creatures do not leave a more readily discernible trail through the ice and snow than they do on solid ground, denying trackers potential bonuses to follow the affected creature's path. (See Weather on pages 93-95 and Cold Dangers on page 302 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more details on the effects of weather and ice.)

Snowshoes, Mass

Transmutation
Level: Clr 3, Drd 2, Rgr 3
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

This spell functions like *snowshoes*, except as noted above. D

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by Ari Marmell · illustrated by David Waldstrom

THE EBON MAW

BEWARE THE WAKING HUNGER

He was the Hunger Eternal, the Insatiable, the Devourer. He was Turaglas, the Ebon Maw, most primal of demon princes. All the world was his to feast upon; panic was his herald, death his outrider, devastation his steed. Only lunatics could worship such a horror, but there are ever those who revel in power and bloodshed, and worship him they did. These were the Feeders of the Ebon Maw, and where the many mouths of Turaglas had not reached, there they spread misery in their master's name.

Thankfully, the world has long been free of Turaglas's fanatics, and their master has slumbered, a prisoner in the spaces between the worlds for longer than memory can tell. But now, thanks to the actions of a single man whose power far exceeded his wisdom, the Ebon Maw begins to awaken. It is only a matter of time before Turaglas once more turns his voracious attention to the world of mortals.

TURAGLAS IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Here you will find everything you need to introduce Turaglas (tu-RAWG-lahss) and his cultists to your own campaign, including unique spells and a new domain, the hierarchy of the Feeders of the Ebon Maw, and relics and magic items. The foul history of the cult is revealed, and even the Ebon Maw himself is detailed. You can drop all of this material into almost any setting without major alteration, or select only some details (such as the spells). The Feeders make exceptional antagonists, whether as primary villains or perpetrators of minor plots and side adventures. Use care before involving Turaglas himself, of course; only if your campaign has reached epic levels should you consider a direct confrontation between the Hunger Eternal and your player characters.

Even when he's not directly influencing events, Turaglas can have a dramatic impact on any campaign world. Have fun with him, his servants, and his machinations.

Just don't expect your players to thank you.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF TURAGLAS

The Ebon Maw crawled from the primordial depths of the Abyss a thousand times a thousand years ago. For eons he engaged in the eternal war between the demon princes, but his forces could not match the others', for the Devourer consumed his own servants as often as he did the enemy.

Although he had no human servants to summon him across the worlds, somehow the Hunger Eternal fled the Abyss before his enemies could destroy him. As the Abyssal war raged, he roamed the world of mortals, devouring all in his path. Nothing was safe, from the tiniest insects to great dragons, from lowly huts to towering mountains.

The Birth of the Feeders

In the fourth year of the Devourer's rampage, the people of a town called Birruvol heard rumors of the great demon approaching their lands. In their fear they found themselves a scapegoat: Ugretheon, an old and unpopular sorcerer. Lazy, cruel, and vindictive, Ugretheon was not powerful, but he used what ability he had to bully others.

Ugretheon was accused of calling the horror down upon them. An angry mob attacked the sorcerer's home, and his spells were far too limited to stop them. Screaming and pleading, Ugretheon was dragged into the street and thrown roughly down onto a headsman's block. The town's chief woodsman approached, axe held aloft . . .

It never fell. The earth shook, and the sun went black. Turaglas had come.

Grown enormous from his unending feast, the demon's form stretched hundreds of yards, a shapeless, fleshy mass. Every part of the hideous shape bore a fang-rimmed mouth, each with a long, sticky tongue and opening on endless blackness. Ugretheon watched in terror as the Hunger Eternal consumed all of Birruvol—except for him. He stood, alone and untouched, in the center of what had once been a village.

Whatever Turaglas's reasons for sparing him—assuming he noticed the sorcerer at all—Ugretheon interpreted this as a deliberate rescue. He fell to his knees as the vast demon passed, prayers of supplication on his lips. The Ebon Maw might never have heard them, yet Ugretheon felt himself infused with a surge of new power. Slowly, his legs shaking but his mind clearer than ever before, he rose and followed his new master into the wild.

The Burning Tongue

Less than a mile away from the former Birruvol stood a small peak. As he passed, the Devourer formed an enormous maw, far larger than any of his other mouths, and took a bite from the mountainside. The newly formed opening resembled nothing so much as a great mouth, with fangs of stone jutting from above and below. A single spur of rock within, long and rounded like a tongue, suddenly ignited with an unholy fire.

Ugretheon made this cave a shrine to Turaglas and established the Feeders of the Ebon Maw, who grew swiftly under his fanatical leadership. In all the centuries since, the flames of the so-called Burning Tongue have brightened and dimmed with the fortunes of the cult and their otherworldly master, but they have never gone out.

The Fall of the Devourer

The Devourer was finally stopped, not by any great champions of good, but by the two most unlikely allies: the great demon princes Demogorgon and Orcus. During a brief lull in their endless war, they looked out and saw the destruction Turaglas had wrought across the Material Plane. The demon lords were furious, for each had his own plans for the mortal world, none of which involved ceding it to an enemy they had thought long gone.

Thus Demogorgon and Orcus took the unprecedented step of joining to destroy Turaglas—although it was a brief alliance, barely an eyeblink to immortal beings. Their combined cults threw down the Feeders and scattered them. Hordes of demons beset the Devourer, forcing him to expend the strength he'd absorbed from years of gluttony. And then, appearing through a *gate* opened by loyal sorcerers, the demon princes themselves assaulted Turaglas.

Against one foe or the other he might have proved victorious, but against both even the Devourer could not stand. The surviving Feeders attempted to create a *gate* for their master's escape, but the demon princes corrupted their magic, sending Turaglas into the void between worlds and shackling him there. Now the Devourer sleeps in his prison, conserving the last of his strength.

Orcus and Demogorgon set their servants to erasing knowledge of the Ebon Maw. They slew all but the most well-hidden of his cultists and destroyed all written accounts of his existence. The name of Turaglas was soon lost to the world, even though the scars of his rampage remained. The few surviving Feeders dared not show themselves, passing down their lore in secret. The Burning Tongue dimmed to a faint glow as the power of the Devourer faded from the lands.

That was millennia gone. But five years ago, everything changed.

Something Stirs

Vuren Krabath was the second child of a baroness and her sorcerer paramour. He had always resented his brother as heir to their father's sorcerous abilities, and soon their mother's lands, while he had neither.

What Krabath *did* have were an unmatched intellect and burning ambition. He studied wizardry, becoming particularly adept at conjuration, which he used to increase his power. His objectives were selfish but hardly evil, and he might never have unleashed horror on the world but for one particularly malevolent quasit.

THE ABBERVALE FEAST

The Feast operating in the small city of Abbervale is a typical division of the cult.

The Abbervale Feast (Small City, Minor Feast): Nonstandard; AL CE; 3,750 gp limit; Membership 23; Mixed (human 74%, half-orc 9%, half-elf 9%, elf 4%, halfling 4%).

Authority Figures: Mouth Yathro Eddarrik, male human Clr8.

Important Characters: Duhrog, male half-orc Ftr4 (bodyguard/enforcer); Siethe Lyrre, female human Ari2 (government infiltrator); Tinnien Alorawhin, male elf Wiz2 (advisor to Eddarrik).

Others: Clr4 (1), Clr2 (2), Clr1 (6), Ftr2 (1), Ftr1 (3), Rog1 (2), Ari1 (2), Sor1 (1), Wiz1 (1).

Notes: All members of the Feast are either chaotic evil, chaotic neutral, or neutral evil. Despite this, all are fanatically loyal to Turaglas and the Feeders. The Abbervale Feast makes every effort to keep its existence and activities secret, manipulating the local government through connections to the nobility it has attained through Lyrre and the other aristocrats.

Krabath sought the names of more and more powerful fiends, from whom he acquired ever-greater magic. But his mundane studies led him only so far. He summoned a quasit and demanded the name of a powerful fiend, one lost to history so that he need not contest with other summoners for its services. The little creature smiled and said, "Turaglas."

Had Krabath taken the time to inquire further, he might have learned this being was nothing less than an Abyssal lord. Instead, overconfident in his abilities, he scribed his most powerful summoning circle on the floor and began to cast.

In the spaces between worlds, his call was heard.

Even weakened and imprisoned, Turaglas was able to manifest briefly in the lesser form of a turagathshnee—and still was far too powerful for Krabath's safeguards. The demon prince broke through the wards and devoured his summoner. Then, as the greater part of him began to rouse from his eons-long slumber, the visage of the Hunger Eternal vanished once more from the world.

Today

The Ebon Maw is awake. He cannot manifest fully; the walls between dimensions and the shackles placed upon him are yet too strong. But his power grows, and his attention is fixed on the Material Plane.

In a mountainside unmarked on any map, the Burning Tongue blazes more brightly than it has in centuries. The Feeders of the Ebon Maw gather once more. The clerics and blackguards of Turaglas again have access to their full range of powers, and their agents skulk throughout the land, sowing discord and shedding blood. Some say Vuren Krabath was corrupted rather than consumed, and that he too wanders the world doing Turaglas's will in places even the Feeders dare not go.

The Feeders do everything in the Devourer's name. All the lives they sacrifice, all the power they gain, all is channeled to their ravenous lord. And if they are not stopped, it is only a matter of time until the Ebon Maw roams the world once more.

THE FEEDERS OF THE EBON MAW

The cult of Turaglas grows stronger, but it is not yet what it was. The Feeders still cannot operate openly or proclaim their devotion to the Devourer. They celebrate and worship secretly, at temples deep in the wilds or shrines concealed in basements and warehouses. The cult draws new members from all ranks of society: the downtrodden who seek a new social order; the greediest merchants; and nobles who hunger for ever more power, or who have grown jaded and now delight in excess. All these deluded fools give their fortunes, their lives, and ultimately their souls to the Ebon Maw.

Beliefs

The Feeders follow a simple but brutal dogma.

- The Hunter Eternal will soon break free of His prison and return to this world that is rightfully His to consume.
- In the early days of the new age, the Ebon Maw will not yet have recovered His strength. He will rely on us, His faithful, to bring Him mortal souls to devour, for while He consumes all, these delight Him most.
- When He has grown strong, the Devourer shall consume the world entire. Only the faithful will be spared the devastation to come. And we shall rebuild and replenish the world behind Him, devoting all our society to His honor, until the time comes to feed again. So shall the cycle continue, through all the ages of eternity, and through it shall we alone endure.
- As the Hunger Eternal consumes the souls of mortals, so shall He consume the power of their pathetic gods, for without worshipers, they are as nothing. He shall chew away the boundaries between worlds, and consume these godlings themselves. Then will the mighty Devourer reign over all, in every imaginable world, and we will rejoice in His supremacy.
- The Ebon Maw must be honored in all ways. Where you can do so without drawing the wrath of the ignorant down upon us, spread death and destruction in His name, for this worship alone does He love.
- No greater destiny exists than to give your life to speed the coming of the Devourer. Fear not the swords of the ignorant, for your soul will strengthen the Ebon Maw, and He will exact your revenge when the walls of His prison shatter.

Organization

The Feeders of the Ebon Maw operate in small, largely autonomous cells called Feasts. Most Feasts have between five and fifty members, depending on the size of the surrounding community.

Feasts are always led by the highest-level cleric of Turaglas in the community. This individual, called a Mouth of Turaglas, holds absolute power. His word is law, and every order is to be obeyed instantly and without question. Only proclamations from the Keeper of the Burning Tongue (see below) or one of her agents can override the orders of a Mouth in his home territory.

Below the Mouth, the other clerics and blackguards, if any, are ranked by order of power (level, in game terms), and then by seniority. Nonclerical cultists are ranked entirely by seniority: A 12th-level wizard may be subservient to a 4th-level commoner, if that commoner has been longer in the cult. Cultists are careful not to let their sect rankings influence their public behavior, though—a noble deferring to a peasant would raise suspicions.

Cobrul Uthgren, Wrath of Turaglas: CR 14; Medium humanoid (human) Rgr6/Blk8; HD 6d8+18 plus 8d10+24, hp 143; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 27, touch 17, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +14; Grp +16; Atk +22 melee (1d6+5/19-20, *White Talon*) or +20 ranged (1d8+3/×3, *+1 unholy composite longbow [+2 Str bonus]*); Full Atk +22/+17/+10 melee (1d6+5/19-20, *White Talon*) and +20/+15 melee (1d6+2/17-20, *+1 keen wounding short sword*), or +20/+15/+10 ranged (1d8+3/×3, *+1 unholy composite longbow [+2 Str bonus]*); SA combat style (two-weapon fighting), favored enemies (humans +4, elves +2), improved combat style (two-weapon fighting), smite good 2/day (+3 attack, +8 damage), sneak attack +2d6; SQ aura of despair, aura of evil, command undead (6/day, +5), dark blessing, *detect good*, fiendish servant, poison use; AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +12, Will +6; Str 15, Dex 20, Con 17, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Concentration +14, Heal +8, Hide +24, Intimidate +10, Jump +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +24, Ride +13, Speak Language (Abyssal, Common), Spot +8, Survival +11; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Endurance, Improved Sunder, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse.

Ranger Spells Prepared (2; save DC 12 + spell level): 1st—*entangle, pass without trace.*

Blackguard Spells Prepared (3/2/1/1; base DC 12 + spell level): 1st—*cause fear, cure light wounds* ×2; 2nd—*bull's strength, darkness;* 3rd—*protection from energy;* 4th—*cure critical wounds.*

Possessions: White Talon (minor artifact, short sword *Fang of Turaglas*), *+1 keen wounding short sword, +1 unholy composite longbow (+2 Str bonus)* with 40 arrows, *+4 improved shadow improved silent moves studded leather* (see new magic items below), *cape of the mountebank, amulet of natural armor +3, ring of protection +2.*

Cobrul Uthgren is tall and heavily muscled. His face is hideously scarred, his mouth missing multiple teeth lost in battle. His hair is bright red, and he wears a patchy beard and moustache in a vain attempt to cover his scarring.

Although deadly enough in a straight-up fight, Uthgren prefers stealth, ambush, and other techniques more in line with an assassin than a warrior.

Titles of Authority

The Feeders of the Ebon Maw use several specific titles and positions. Many cultists do not know the names of the people who hold these positions but are familiar with them by title alone.

The Keeper of the Burning Tongue: The Devourer's high priest, the Keeper is the supreme authority in the sect. She attains this position by virtue of sheer power, and any Mouth may challenge for the office. The Keeper sets the rules, but it is always a contest to the death. The current Keeper, Lenolai Gronn, has held her title for several years and receives few challenges.

In addition to leading the cult as a whole, the Keeper is Mouth to her own Feast. This is the cell responsible for maintaining the Temple of the Burning Tongue, a labyrinthine complex within the hillside containing that eternal flame. The temple is full of shrines, meditation alcoves, dungeons, and torture chambers, as well as mortal, undead, and demonic guards. Challenges for the Keeper's office take place here. It also contains much of the cult's wealth, but only the mightiest of adventurers would dare to seize such treasure.

The Wrath of Turaglas: The Wrath is the commander of the Breath of the Void, the martial arm of the cult, and is military advisor to the Keeper. The position is always held by either a martial cleric or a blackguard. Any member of the Breath may challenge the Wrath of Turaglas in battle to the death.

The current Wrath is the blackguard Cobrul Uthgren. PCs who become enemies of the cult are more likely to encounter him than any of the other high-ranking members of the organization.

The Voices of Turaglas: These are cultists whom the Keeper has appointed as emissaries to the Feasts around the world. A Voice speaks with the Keeper's authority and passes her orders on to the Mouths.

The Mouths of Turaglas: As discussed above, a Mouth is the leader of a specific Feast.

The Breath of the Void

This quasi-military organization primarily comprises war clerics, blackguards, and fighters. They serve as soldiers, inquisitors, assassins, and bodyguards. While all cultists of Turaglas are eager to murder in their master's name, those of the Breath are specifically trained for violence.

The Breath exists outside the normal hierarchy of the Feeders, answering only to the Wrath of Turaglas and the Keeper of the Burning Tongue. Rank is determined not by seniority but entirely by accomplishment on the battlefield. The Keeper and the Wrath try to keep the Breath constantly occupied, as these bloodthirsty warriors often end up fighting one another when they grow bored.

CLERICS OF TURAGLAS

Although the Ebon Maw is not a deity, his clerics receive the full range of divine spells and abilities available to others of their class. Whether Turaglas has some means of granting such power despite his nondivine status, or is himself the servant or avatar of some greater evil, none can say.

Clerics of Turaglas have access to the Chaos, Destruction, and War domains, as well as a unique domain: Hunger. His favored weapon is the heavy flail. Their holy symbol is a disk of either black iron or tarnished silver, with great silver or ivory teeth pointing inward around its circumference.

SPELLS AND FEATS

*If a spell, feat, or magic item is marked with one asterisk, it is from the *Book of Vile Darkness*. Suggested replacements for DMs who are not using that book are listed after them in brackets.

**A spell or magic item marked with two asterisks is new and described in this article.

Hunger Domain

Deity: Turaglas

Granted Power: You are immune to natural poisons, diseases, or drugs that require ingestion. Substances delivered by touch, inhalation, or injection still affect you, and you are still subject to ingested toxins that are magical in nature.

Domain Spells

1 **Slow Consumption***: Caster absorbs health and sustenance from helpless subject. [**Ray of Enfeeblement:** Ray deals 1d6 points +1 per two levels Str damage.]

2 **Jaws of Adamantine****: Subject gains an adamantine bite attack.

3 **Cannibalize******: Subject gains a powerful bite attack and gains temporary hit points by consuming flesh.

4 **Caustic Bile****: Acidic splash deals 1d6/level (max 10d6).

5 **Enervation:** Subject gains 1d4 negative levels.

6 **Insatiable Hunger****: Subjects starve regardless of how much they eat.

7 **Whirlwind of Teeth***: Creates moving 5-ft./level cylinder that deals 1d8 damage per two levels each round. [**Destruction**[r]: Kills subject and destroys remains.]

8 **Steal Life***: Caster drains 1 ability score point per round and becomes younger. [**Horrid Wilting:** Deals 1d8 damage/level within 30 ft.]

9 **Gate**[x]: Connects two planes for travel or summoning; when cast as a Hunger spell, can be used *only* to connect with the Abyss.

New Spells

The following spells exist only within the Hunger domain, and are unknown to anyone outside the Feeders of the Ebon Maw.

Cannibalize
Transmutation [Evil]
Level: Hunger 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The subject of this spell gains a powerful bite attack. If its jaws are not already built for biting, they elongate into a snout filled with razor-sharp teeth. If the subject can use weapons, it retains this ability. A creature with natural weapons retains those weapons. When making a single attack, a subject fighting without weapons uses either its bite attack or its primary natural weapon (if it has any); one armed with a weapon uses its bite or a weapon, as it desires. When making a full attack, a subject fighting without weapons uses its bite attack along with its natural weapons; one armed with a weapon usually uses the weapon along with its bite and any other natural weapons as natural secondary attacks.

If the subject does not have a bite attack, use the appropriate damage value from the table below according to the creature's size, plus modifiers for Strength. If it already possesses a bite attack, its bite grows more potent, dealing damage as a creature one size category larger.

Creature Size	Bite Damage
Fine	1
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6
Gargantuan	2d8
Colossal	4d6

Furthermore, the subject gains vitality from consuming flesh during the spell's duration. This must be the flesh of a living creature—dead and undead bodies do not count. The subject gains 1 temporary hit point for every 3 points of damage it deals to living creatures with its bite attack. These temporary hit points last for a maximum of 1 hour.

Caustic Bile
Evocation [Evil]
Level: Hunger 4
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Area: 5-ft.-radius spread
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Spell Resistance: Yes

You splash creatures in the spell's area with an caustic substance not unlike bile or digestive juices, that deals 1d6 points of acid damage per level (maximum 10d6) to every creature within the area.

You designate a point at which you want the bile to erupt, and a fountain of greenish-brown acid erupts from that point, showering creatures in the area.

Caustic bile deals acid damage to unattended objects within the area. At high levels, it could eat through a few inches of wood.

Insatiable Hunger
Transmutation
Level: Hunger 6
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 round
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Targets: One creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

Creatures affected by this spell begin starving at a vastly accelerated rate, regardless of how much they eat. The subjects suffer the effects of starvation on an hourly, rather than daily, basis. That is, after 3 hours, and every hour thereafter, the targets must make a Constitution check (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Anyone who has taken nonlethal damage from starvation is fatigued. So long as the spell lasts, this damage cannot be recovered by any means, natural or magical.

Jaws of Adamantine
Transmutation
Level: Hunger 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The subject's jaws gain increased strength, with nearly unbreakable teeth. Further, the jaws unhinge and distend, allowing the subject to bite almost anything, albeit in a clumsy fashion. The bite deals damage according to the creature's size, as shown on the table below. This spell is not intended for use in combat: Against a moving target, the subject cannot bite with full force and applies only half of any Strength bonus to damage. A subject of this spell who attempts to make a bite attack takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls, due to the awkward shape of the mouth. The subject of this can bypass adamantine-based damage reduction with a successful bite attack, however.

Creature Size	Bite Damage
Fine	1
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6
Gargantuan	2d8
Colossal	4d6

Against inanimate objects, the subject adds its full Strength bonus (if any) to bite damage and ignores hardness of 20 or less.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

The Feeders of the Ebon Maw are sometimes credited with the original creation of several well-known magic items, such as the *sword of life stealing*, the *ring of sustenance*, and the *bag of devouring*. In addition, the cult possesses several less familiar items.

Rod of Famine

This foul creation so far exists only in the possession of the Feeders' greatest leaders. It appears to be carved from a single bone, with leathery, mummified flesh still clinging to it. Several teeth protrude from one end. When used in combat, the rod strikes as a *+2 light mace*. In addition, whenever the wielder scores a critical hit, the rod deals 1d10 points of starvation (nonlethal) damage as well as normal damage.

With a touch, the rod can rot food and wither nonmagical vegetation (up to 2 cubic feet), three times per day. This ability does no additional damage to plant creatures. It also functions as a *ring of sustenance* so long as it remains on the wielder's person.

Finally, three times per day, the wielder may quicken any Hunger domain spells he casts, as though he had prepared the spell with the Quicken Spell feat, without changing the spell slot of the altered spell.

Moderate transmutation; CL 11th; Craft Rod, Quicken Spell, creator must have access to the Hunger domain; Price 65,000 gp.

Minor Artifacts: The Fangs of Turaglas

Forged from ores that the Devourer himself consumed and regurgitated, and bound with foul magic, the *Fangs of Turaglas* are powerful and unholy blades inexorably linked with the demon prince.

Thirteen of these weapons exist:

- 1 bastard sword
- 1 dagger
- 1 greatsword
- 1 heavy pick
- 1 longspear
- 3 longswords
- 3 short swords
- 2 shortspears

The Feeders of the Ebon Maw currently possess five of the *Fangs*: the greatsword, two longswords, one short sword, and a shortspear. They are constantly hunting for the other eight, and any character who possesses one can expect no rest from their pursuit.

All of these weapons have the following abilities.

- Each is a +3 adamantine wounding weapon.
- Life Stealing: A *Fang of Turaglas* bestows one negative level whenever it scores a critical hit. The weapon wielder gains 1d6 temporary hit points each time a negative level is bestowed on another. These temporary hit points last for 24 hours. One day after being struck, subjects must make a DC 16 Fortitude save for each negative level or lose a character level.

These powers make the *Fangs of Turaglas* very potent weapons indeed. As demonic artifacts, however, they possess drawbacks that should make even the most evil characters hesitant to use them.

- Whenever a natural 1 is rolled on the attack roll, the weapon bestows a negative level (as described above) on the wielder, except the wielder does not gain temporary hit points for negative levels bestowed in this way.
- Whenever the *Fang*'s possessor enters combat, the weapon forces her to wield it. If she decides to draw any other weapon, she must first make a DC 25 Will save or draw the Fang instead.
- Once the *Fang* is wielded in battle, its wielder goes berserk (gaining all the benefits and drawbacks of the barbarian's rage ability). She attacks the nearest enemy and continues to fight until unconscious or dead, or until no enemy remains within 30 feet.
- Even if the bearer of a *Fang* manages to avoid wielding the weapon, she must still carry it and cannot give it away. She can only be free of the weapon through a carefully worded *wish* or *miracle* spell. The weapon can also be taken from her forcibly (she can still be disarmed normally).

The *Fangs of Turaglas* feed life force from their blows in battle directly to Turaglas, bringing the Devourer closer to fully awakening and shattering the shackles that bind him. This is the true purpose for which they were constructed. Every time a *Fang* delivers a negative level or a killing blow, the wielder has a 5 percent chance of receiving a mental image of the Devourer and a flash of insight into the weapon's purpose. Of course, even once the wielder knows, it's not easy to stop using the blade.

No precise number exists for how much life energy Turaglas needs to escape; the DM must determine the required number of lives taken and negative levels bestowed by the *Fangs*. Having the Devourer run loose in your campaign is a world-altering event, so exercise care when deciding under what circumstances—if any—to allow it. Should the Ebon Maw ever be freed, each life taken by one of the Fangs while he is manifested counts as a life consumed by Turaglas himself, allowing him to gain health (see his statistics below). Make certain any player whose character learns the truth of the weapons understands the looming danger they pose; even the most selfish and evil villain should realize he must rid himself of the cursed artifact.

There is no way to wield the *Fangs of Turaglas* without feeding power to Turaglas; they are linked with him on a primal level, and even a deity cannot sever that link. The only known way to destroy a *Fang* is for a good entity of divine rank to hammer it flat against an anvil constructed of stone or metal from Mechanus.

Strong conjuration, evocation, and necromancy; CL 20th.

CREATURES

Turaglas spawned several demon breeds, including the abyssal maw (see *Monster Manual II*). Most are long forgotten, but as the Feeders grow in power and influence, one line of the Devourer's servants has reappeared on the Material Plane.

Demon, Turagathshnee (Tanar'ri)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar, Tanar'ri)
Hit Dice: 9d8+27 (67 hp)
Initiative: +1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 15 ft.

Armor Class: 26 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +16 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 25
Base Attack/Grapple: +9/+18
Attack: Bite +14 melee (2d6+5)
Full Attack: Bite +14 melee (2d6+5) and 2 claws +11 melee (1d6+2)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, spell-like abilities, *summon tanar'ri*, swallow whole
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 21, telepathy 100 ft.
Saves: Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +7
Abilities: Str 21, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills: Climb +25, Concentration +15, Hide +9, Intimidate 12, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Listen +13, Move Silently +13, Search +15, Spellcraft +17, Spot +13, Survival +1 (+3 following tracks, +3 on other planes)
Feats: Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)
Environment: Infinite Layers of the Abyss
Organization: Solitary, feast (2-4), or banquet (1-2 turagathshnees and 6-12 abyssal maws)
Challenge Rating: 12
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 10-13 HD (Large); 14-27 HD (Huge)

Nearly 9 feet tall and gangly, this creature has legs, arms, and fingers far longer in proportion to its torso than a human's. Its elongated head is completely featureless except for a single gaping maw, with rows of razor-sharp fangs, that extends vertically from the creature's chin to the base of its skull. Its hide is a mottled gray, like a stone-hued serpent. The middle finger on each hand is thicker and longer than the others and capped with a wicked talon, as is the middle toe on each foot.

The turagathshnees are the primary servitors of the Ebon Maw. Despite their inherently chaotic nature, they are unswervingly loyal to their prince. Even when summoned by mortal conjurers for unrelated tasks, they attempt to turn their actions to benefit the Devourer, always seeking a way for him to escape his prison.

Turagathshnees speak Abyssal but prefer to communicate telepathically.

Combat
Turagathshnees enjoy melee combat, as it gives them an opportunity to sate their appetite for sentient beings. They prefer to swallow opponents whole, but they do not hesitate to use their other abilities if the situation demands. Turagathshnees dislike fighting from a distance but are happy to take advantage of their reach. The demon's natural weapons, as well as any weapon it wields, are treated as evil and chaotic aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a turagathshnee must hit a Large or smaller opponent with both claw attacks. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and crams the opponent into its maw as a free action, automatically dealing bite damage. It can attempt to swallow the foe in the next round.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*blasphemy* (DC 17), *deeper darkness*, *desecrate*, *detect good*, *detect magic*, and *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only); 3/day—*cannibalize***, *caustic bile***, *jaws of adamantine***, *slow consumption** (DC 12) [*ray of enfeeblement* (DC 11)]; 1/day—*enervation*, *whirlwind of teeth** (DC 17) [*destruction* (DC 17)]. Caster level 13th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

***Summon Tanar'ri* (Sp):** Once per day a turagathshnee can attempt to summon 4d10 abyssal maws or another turagathshnee with a 40% chance of success.

TURAGLAS (The Hunger Eternal, the Devourer, the Ebon Maw)

	Turagathshnee Form Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar, Tanar'ri)	True Form Colossal Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar, Tanar'ri)
Hit Dice:	40d8 + 520 (700 hp)	40d8 + 680 (860 hp)
Initiative:	+4	+4
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares), climb 15 ft.	20 ft. (4 squares)
Armor Class:	42 (-2 size, +6 insight, +28 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 42	36 (-8 size, +6 insight, +28 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 36
Base Attack/Grapple:	+40/+57	+40/+73
Attack:	Bite +48 melee (2d8+9/19-20)	Bite +50 melee (4d6+17/19-20)
Full Attack:	Bite +48 melee (2d8+9/19-20) and 2 claws +45 melee (2d4+4)	Up to 30 bites (see below) +50 melee (4d6+17/19-20)
Space/Reach:	15 ft./15 ft.	60 ft./20 ft.
Special Attacks:	Consume essence, improved grab, inexorable maw, spell-like abilities, *summon tanar'ri*, swallow whole, warp flesh	Consume essence, improved grab, inexorable maw, spell-like abilities, *summon tanar'ri*, swallow whole, warp flesh
Special Qualities:	Damage reduction 15/epic and good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, see invisibility, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 40, telepathy 100 ft.	Damage reduction 15/epic and good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, see invisibility, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 40, telepathy 100 ft.
Saves:	Fort +35, Ref +22, Will +28	Fort +39, Ref +22, Will +28
Abilities:	Str 28, Dex 10, Con 36, Int 26, Wis 22, Cha 20	Str 44, Dex 10, Con 44, Int 26, Wis 22, Cha 20
Skills:	Climb +60, Concentration +56, Hide +35, Intimidate +48, Knowledge (arcana) +51, Knowledge (history) +51, Knowledge (the planes) +51, Knowledge (religion) +51, Listen +49, Move Silently +43, Search +51, Spellcraft +53, Spot +49, Survival +49 (+51 following tracks, +51 on other planes), Swim +52, Use Magic Device +48	Climb +68, Concentration +60, Hide +27, Intimidate +48, Knowledge (arcana) +51, Knowledge (history) +51, Knowledge (the planes) +51, Knowledge (religion) +51, Listen +49, Move Silently +43, Search +51, Spellcraft +53, Spot +49, Survival +49 (+51 following tracks, +51 on other planes), Swim +60, Use Magic Device +48
Feats:	Awesome Blow, Cleave, Dark Speech* [Improved Bull Rush], Empower Spell-Like Ability (*caustic bile***), Great Cleave, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*caustic bile***), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*enervation*), Weapon Focus (bite)	Awesome Blow, Cleave, Dark Speech* [Improved Bull Rush], Empower Spell-Like Ability (*caustic bile***), Great Cleave, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*caustic bile***), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*enervation*), Weapon Focus (bite)
Environment:	Infinite Layers of the Abyss	Infinite Layers of the Abyss
Organization:	Solitary, or Turaglas plus 2-12 turagathshnees and 4-40 abyssal maws	Solitary, or Turaglas plus 2-12 turagathshnees and 4-40 abyssal maws
Challenge Rating:	27	30
Treasure:	Quadruple standard	Quadruple standard
Alignment:	Chaotic evil	Chaotic evil
Advancement:	—	

Swallow Whole (Ex): A turagathshnee is capable of distending its jaw so greatly that it can swallow creatures its own size; its gullet is partially extradimensional space, allowing it to hold such prey. It can attempt to swallow an opponent in its mouth by making a successful grapple check. Once inside the demon's gullet, the opponent takes 2d6+5 points of bludgeoning damage plus 1d4 points of damage due to negative energy per round.

A swallowed creature can climb out of the gullet with a successful grapple check. This returns it to the demon's mouth. Alternatively, a swallowed creature can try to cut its way out by using a light piercing or slashing weapon to deal at least 25 points of damage to the gullet (AC 18). (This looks truly disturbing to witnesses, as the creature climbing from the wound may be as large as the demon itself.) Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out.

A Large turagathshnee's extradimen-

sional gullet can hold 1 Large, 4 Medium, 16 Small, 32 Tiny, or 256 Diminutive or smaller opponents.

Skills: Turagathshnees receive a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. A turagathshnee can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Turaglas

Turaglas has two forms. His smaller form is an abnormally large turagathshnee and can be described as listed for that creature, except that he stands about 18 feet tall.

His larger, natural form can be described as follows:

It is the largest of the demon lords: a fleshy mass of eyes and mouths, not unlike a gigantic gibbering mouther. The creature's form constantly shifts, rendering precise measurements impossible, but it averages several dozens of feet on a side. Its hide ranges from a sickly green to the pallid gray of a rotting corpse, while its eyes cover all hues of the spectrum. Staring into one of the dozens of gaping maws reveals nothing but teeth of invulnerable bone and metal, and an endless corridor of blood and blackened flesh.

For thousands of years, Turaglas has been bound between worlds, trapped in slumber that, while deep, has not prevented traces of his power and rage. Although he cannot yet escape his prison in his true form, a summoning ritual that invokes him by name allows him to manifest in turagathshnee form for several minutes.

Combat

Turaglas relishes personal combat, although he thinks of it more as feeding. He prefers to consume the living, but he will eat literally anything. Only if faced with foes so powerful or so numerous that he feels threatened—something that has happened only once—does he attempt to direct allies against his enemies. At times, however, back when he roamed the world, some of his minions would fight at his side. So long as they did not interfere with his feeding, Turaglas didn't object to their presence.

Turaglas sometimes leads with his spell-like abilities from a distance, but he greatly prefers not to kill living foes until he is close enough to devour them.

In his natural form, Turaglas can make up to thirty bite attacks, but he can direct a maximum of six bites against a single creature. Turaglas's natural weapons, as well as any weapon it wields, are treated as evil aligned and chaotic aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Consume Essence (Su): Turaglas gains vitality by consuming living beings. Creatures are consumed if they are swallowed whole and die from damage they take in Turaglas's gullet, or if he devours their bodies within 3 rounds of death. He gains 1 hit point per Hit Die each time he consumes a creature. These hit points are semipermanent; they do not return if lost through injury, but they never fade over time. Thus, the more Turaglas feeds, the stronger he grows.

If you wish to simulate Turaglas as having already consumed numerous beings prior to the encounter, roll 10d10 and add the result to the hit point totals listed above.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, Turaglas must hit an opponent of the same size or smaller with both claw attacks (in turagathshnee form) or a bite attack (in his natural form). He can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If he wins the grapple check in turagathshnee form, he establishes a hold and crams the opponent into his maw as a free action, automatically dealing bite damage, and can attempt to swallow the foe in the next round. If he wins the grapple check in his natural form, he can attempt to swallow the foe that round as a free action.

Inexorable Maw (Ex): Turaglas ignores up to 40 points of hardness when biting objects. He is fully capable of digesting any material, although he gains no benefit from doing so.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*blasphemy* (DC 22), *caustic bile*** (DC 19), *deeper darkness, desecrate, detect good, detect law, detect thoughts, fear, greater dispel magic, greater teleport, telekinesis* (DC 20), *tongues* (self only), *unhallow, unholy aura, unholy blight* (DC 19), *water breathing*; 1/day—*enervation, insatiable hunger*** (DC 21). Caster level 40th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

***Summon Tanar'ri* (Sp):** Once per day, Turaglas can automatically summon 1d4 turagathshnees or 2d20 abyssal maws.

Swallow Whole (Ex): Turaglas can attempt to swallow a grabbed opponent by making a successful grapple check. Once inside the demon's gullet, the opponent takes 4d6+17 points of bludgeoning damage plus 2d8 points of damage due to negative energy per round if Turaglas is in his true form, or 2d8+9 points of bludgeoning damage plus 1d8 points of damage due to negative energy per round if he is in turagathshnee form.

A swallowed creature can climb out of the gullet with a successful grapple check. This returns it to the demon's mouth. Alternatively, a swallowed creature can try to cut its way out by using a light piercing or slashing weapon to deal at least 60 points of damage to the gullet (AC 24). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out.

In his natural form, Turaglas's gullet can hold 2 Colossal, 8 Gargantuan, 32 Huge, 128 Large, 512 Medium, 2,048 Small, 8,192 Tiny, or 32,768 Diminutive or smaller opponents. In turagathshnee form, his gullet can hold 1 Huge, 4 Large, 16 Medium, 64 Small, 256 Tiny, or 1,024 Diminutive or smaller opponents.

Warp Flesh (Su): Rather than consuming a swallowed creature, Turaglas may choose to corrupt it. In this case, once a creature reaches 0 hit points within his gullet, the Devourer regurgitates it as a free action. The creature is instantly restored to full hit points but remains stunned for 6d10 minutes and is hideously warped, both physically and mentally. Its alignment shifts to chaotic evil, and it works to further the demon lord's goals, combining its own objectives with those of the Ebon Maw, whether conscious of this or not. The creature's physical alteration may be simulated with the fiendish, half-fiend, or corrupted* templates.

See Invisibility (Su): Turaglas continuously uses this ability, as the spell (caster level 40th).

Skills: In turagathshnee form, Turaglas receives a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. He can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

THE ECOLOGY OF THE DRIDER

by Paul Leach · illustrated by Howard Lyon

Even the drow have outcasts they can look down upon—the driders. Half dark elf, half giant spider, every drider is a twisted abomination and a mockery of the centaurs that roam the forests. Cursed by Lolth, the very goddess who once favored them, driders burn with shame and bloodlust to match the evil and depravity of their former lives. Although they have been driven from their communities, they often prowl the fringes of drow territory, longing to reclaim their rightful positions. They are feared, but they are also hunted.

Every drider is said to have once been among Lolth's Chosen, powerful spellcasters with the ability to lead her dark children to victory against their many enemies. Many Chosen remain unknown, but drow assume that the greatest priests, warlords, and heroes rank among them. The goddess promotes strength by overcoming opposition, and so puts her Chosen through a secret, diabolical test. The exact nature of the test may vary from one candidate to the next, but no one ever speaks of it—pass or fail.

Those who please the goddess continue in their ruthless acquisition of power, glorifying Lolth, while those found wanting are transformed into bloodthirsty monstrosities. Although it is heresy to speak it, some believe Lolth creates driders capriciously.

ECOLOGICAL NOTES

Driders are made, not born. Few beings have witnessed their infernal transformation, not that many drow spellcasters merit the double-edged attention of their goddess and risk such consequences for failure. The change may take hours or days. A cursed drow typically enters seclusion or leaves her home when it begins, for if she is trapped in a drow city in drider form, she will be slain by her erstwhile fellows.

Once the new drider recovers from the physical trauma of metamorphosis, it is filled with a craving for warm-blooded prey. Its arachnid hunger is guided by a malevolent soul and an intellect darkened by self-loathing and a hatred for all drow. In some ways, though, the drider tries to continue its previous life by acquiring more spellcasting power. Even if the monster does not advance further in its former class, it retains some of its old abilities and can use them as well as any creature whose mind tinkers with madness. Spells are a great way to subdue prey and protect oneself from hated former kin.

Despite the Spider Queen's obvious dissatisfaction with her fallen Chosen, she still allows drider clerics access to her domains. Perhaps she wishes them to test her other servants, who will either become stronger or perish to the outcasts' poisoned fangs. This is no different from the internecine fighting she encourages already. The goddess even allows a drider to serve in her fiendish Hand of Vengeance (see "Revenge of the Spider Queen" in *Dragon* #279).

Drider Lairs

Driders prefer seclusion, where they can indulge their bitterness and plan grand, mad schemes of vengeance against Lolth's faithful. They might maintain the same dens for decades, living like murderous hermits. They generally seek intelligent creatures only to consume them. Driders often haunt fungal forests and subterranean lakes, places that attract humanoids seeking food and water. They even linger near drow communities, preying on the irregular patrol,

merchant caravan, or goblinoid slave gang.

Driders typically operate within a few miles of their lairs.

When selecting a lair, driders prefer caverns that are not dead ends and try to prevent enemies and prey from entering undetected. They don't like to be surprised, and they always prepare an escape route in case things go badly. This is often a winding vertical shaft, which limits pursuers' line of sight and is hard to climb. They favor terrain that helps them spot invisible intruders, such as mud patches, lakes and pools, and beds of mold. Driders often use shriekers, natural warning systems that do not necessarily arouse suspicion, and sometimes protect their lair with warding spells such as *alarm* (usually set to produce a mental tone) and *glyph of warding*.

As they did in their previous lives, driders amass treasure. Their hoards consist of whatever they took with them when they fled drow society, as well as the possessions of their victims. Driders especially prize magic items that help them avoid detection. However, driders never search for powerful magic, such as *wish*, with the intent of transforming back into drow—they know that Lolth would only curse them again.

SAMPLE TREASURE

A drider has double standard treasure. A typical hoard has a total value of 2,600 gp. The drider might not have any magic items, but usually it has three or four minor items or a couple of minor items and a medium item. Assigning treasure randomly favors potions, rings, and scrolls, but a DM could choose to give the creature anything within range that it might find useful. The following useful magic items provide a sampling of treasure that suits a drider's abilities and general personality traits.

Potions: cure *light wounds*, cure *moderate wounds*, *nondetection*.

Minor Wondrous Items: *elixir of hiding*, *elixir of sneaking*.

Minor Rings: *counterspells*, *feather falling*, *protection +1*, *sustenance*.

Medium Rings: *invisibility*, *protection +2*, *wizardry (I)*.

Scrolls: Any of the spells mentioned in the discussion of drider tactics.

SOCIETY NOTES

Driders don't really have a culture of their own, nor do they form long-lasting communities. The only thing they have in common is their drow origin, a shared affliction, and a burning desire to avenge themselves on uncursed drow. Some of them turn to the worship of other gods, such as Ghaunadaur and Vhaeraun from the FORGOTTEN REALMS *Campaign Setting*, drow deities of oozes and ropers, and of thieves and male drow, respectively. Even these cults are scarcely unified, though, and they are still despised by normal dark elven worshipers.

If they share their existence with other creatures at all, driders prefer mindless beings—especially monstrous spiders, although they might have *charmed* servants. A drider cleric may have a gang of undead at its command, while a cleric of Ghaunadaur might protect its den with several slimy guards. Bugbears, troglodytes, and trolls can serve driders, but they usually have to be magically controlled since they fear the drow outcasts.

A drider might form temporary alliances to fight a common enemy or pursue greater spoils in blood and loot. Often a settlement of evil humanoids allows the drider to reside within its territory and harass neighboring enclaves of drow or other foes. Driders sometimes form joint ventures with bandit gangs, and they can be found assisting small groups of duergar and derro.

VS. PCS

Driders surprise and trap their prey, softening it up with ranged spells, then finishing it off in melee. They take care to protect themselves from ranged attacks, which make these tactics less effective.

Preparation

The drider's spellcasting style influences its approach to combat.

No Surprises: Driders know the value of stealth and do all they can to prevent enemies from using it against them. A drider might keep *see invisibility* or *invisibility purge* on hand to deal with those pesky duergar raiders, as well as deep-delving adventurers with access to magical invisibility. Driders already have the advantage of innate *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, but wizards can add this to their spell lists as well.

Extra Protection: Drider wizards and sorcerers focus on defensive spells such as *blur*, *mage armor*, *mirror image*, *protection from arrows*, and *shield*. Clerics use *entropic shield* and *shield of faith*; those with undead minions bolster them with *desecrate*. *Silence* is the best protection from enemy spellcasters.

Time To Leave: A drider keeps a spell or two in reserve to expedite its retreat or delay pursuers. *Darkness*, *gaseous form*, *invisibility*, and *stinking cloud* are good choices.

Tactics

Once engaged, driders can pursue several different options.

Welcome to My Parlor: When they are not hunting, driders lure prey into their lairs. *Dancing lights* and *ghost sound* are good ways to attract curious passersby. Drider clerics sometimes use undead to carry stones imbued with *daylight* spells. From a distance, any of these methods produces the impression of unwary, light-dependent surface dwellers stumbling about, irresistible bait for most denizens of the Underdark.

Surprise!: Driders prefer to get the drop on their opponents. Sometimes they need only hide in the upper reaches of a cave with a high ceiling, using their darkvision and climbing ability to spy on victims from above. A drider might let its servant creatures initiate combat, distracting foes while it moves up using Hide and Move Silently.

Good spell selection never hurts, and drider wizards use their inherent *levitate*, or sometimes *invisibility* paired with *fly*. *Rope trick* is a great way to watch the next meal from seclusion, then drop a spidersilk rope when the PCs aren't looking up. Clerics can use *meld into stone* and *obscuring mist*, while those with the Trickery domain have even more sneaky choices.

Stand-Off Attacks: Driders try to incapacitate their foes as quickly as possible from a distance. Some clerics pave

the way for magical and poisonous assaults by using *doom* on enemy spellcasters, but otherwise they use direct spells such as *hold person, sound burst,* and *spiritual weapon.*

Drider wizards and sorcerers cast dramatic, flashy spells to flatten the PCs. They usually begin with *web* and *ray of enfeeblement* to trap and weaken the most dangerous opponents. After that they might use *spectral hand* to deliver *chill touch, ghoul touch, shocking grasp,* or *vampiric touch* spells. *Magic missile* is always a good choice, and multiple castings can blast away the hit points of PC spellcasters and keep them off-balance. *Fireball* has its uses, but it is most often a last-ditch tactic since a drider doesn't want to ruin the tasty, warm-blooded meal.

Regardless of spellcasting bent, a drider can simply shoot opponents with a bow. If it has ambushed drow patrols recently, it probably has arrows coated with drow poison. This tactic is tricky if the drider is *levitating,* however, which incurs cumulative negative combat modifiers.

Come And Get It: While the drider peppers the PCs with spells, its arachnid pets move in, as might any undead guards. (Clerics of Ghaunadaur prevent their oozes from destroying prey if they can.) The drider enters melee as soon as the PCs appear weakened. If the enemy is immobile (or won't leave) but still strong, the drider might dart into combat for a round or two to deliver a poisonous bite, especially if it can make a flanking attack. A drider cleric might use this opportunity to cast *bestow curse,* a great way to reduce a PC's chance of saving against its poison, or reduce his Strength to the point that one bite might render him helpless.

VS. DRIDERS

Don't think of driders as just another drow spellcaster who happens to be part spider. Add arachnid abilities (poison and climbing), decent Hit Dice and Constitution, multiple weapon attacks, and spell resistance to its magic talents, and you have a monster that can demolish a party quickly if it surprises them.

Preparation

Don't go blindly into a drider's lair or places where driders might lurk.

KILLER COMBOS

Driders combine very well with other subterranean denizens whose abilities complement their own strengths.

Drider Cleric and Shadows: A drider cleric can easily rebuke or control shadows, then use them in its ambushes. A good tactic is to cast *desecrate* on a section of underground passage and position the shadows there to catch the party unawares. Once a few PCs have lost some Strength, the drider moves in with its poisonous bite: The additional Strength damage will likely knock a character out of the fight. The drider rebukes the shadows if they threaten to kill most of the party—it doesn't want to miss the chance to taste warm blood.

A drider and four shadows make an EL 9 encounter.

Drider Wizard and Roper: The drider has one level of wizard, making it a 7th-level caster. It casts *stoneskin* on the roper to decrease the chance of cutting the strands. If it feels generous, the drider might cast other spells on its ally to defend against magic attacks, but it is more likely to protect itself (the roper's spell resistance is much higher than the drider's). The drider's poisonous bite is a devastating follow-up to the massive Strength damage from the roper's strand attacks.

This pair makes a tough EL 12 encounter.

Detective Work: If you have a chance to learn about a drider you might encounter, do so. Gather Information can provide some clues if you question enemies of the monster. If you can determine its spellcasting class, you can anticipate its magical tactics and potential allies. A wizard or sorcerer probably has plenty of offensive spells, but might not have companions other than a few monstrous spiders, if any. A cleric is likely to command undead creatures, but if you know its patron deity is Ghaunadaur, expect some oozes as well.

Protection Against Poison and Spells: The poison of driders and spiders deals Strength damage. Get ready for those nasty bites with antitoxin and spells such as *delay poison* and *neutralize poison.* If you don't have either of these, *bull's strength* is a good substitute. Even a simple *protection from evil* spell increases saves against the drider's poison (but not that of the neutral spiders) and magic attacks. Characters who have taken feats that increase saving throws, or who have racial bonuses on saves, also have an advantage.

Good Offense: Driders enjoy spell resistance and good saving throws, so it helps to have one or more of the Spell Penetration, Spell Focus, and Heighten Spell feats (listed in suggested order of preference). Spells that inhibit the drider's own casting, such as *silence* or *hold monster,* are good choices. Since the drider can put itself out of easy reach by climbing or levitating, be sure to use *spider climb, levitate,* or *fly* to improve your mobility and stay within reach.

Tactics

Consider hiring a ranger with aberrations as a favored enemy if the party doesn't already have one. And since driders usually don't enter melee until the party is badly weakened, make sure you have plenty of ranged firepower.

Detection: Don't let the drider and its gang of arachnids, undead, or oozes get the drop on your party. Use Survival to discover if any of those nasty monsters live nearby, and Spot to find those hiding in that giant mushroom patch or mold-encrusted cave. Divination spells can help a lot, especially *detect evil, detect magic, detect undead,* and *see invisibility.*

Stop the Spells: Keep that arrogant drider from wearing you down at range with spells. Responding with your own offensive magic, using one-shot, one-kill spells such as *hold monster* or *fireball* can work—if you can get past the creature's spell resistance, and it fails its saving throws. You need a fallback plan, such as counterspelling if you have a good idea of the drider's spell selection. A more reliable method is to use *silence,* which significantly reduces its choice of spells. You could try to cast the spell directly on the drider, but spell resistance and good saving throws are still a problem. Instead, give a *silenced* stone to a tough fighter who is going to charge the monster, or to a rogue who can skirt around it and set up flanking and sneak attacks. (If the stone carrier needs to engage the drider aerially, make

sure to cast *fly* first!)

Engage: Unless you successfully use magical and nonmagical ranged attacks to pummel a drider that cannot return fire and cannot escape, you will need to mix it up in melee. If you have neutralized its spellcasting with *silence*, you might be able to finish it off with only a couple of combat specialists armed with great Fortitude saves and big weapons. Otherwise, all bets are off—a fighter who laughs at poison can be taken out easily by a spell that requires a Will save.

PC DRIDERS

Driders are not easy to develop as player characters, considering their solitary nature and feeding habits. A drider might join a party of adventurers to achieve a mutual objective, such as raiding a drow outpost or dealing with a troublesome mind flayer. Perhaps the drider enlists their aid in retrieving magical possessions left behind in its former homeland. It is possible to expand this limited association, but such a campaign should remain in the Underdark. Hated as driders are in that sunless world, imagine how one would be received at the local tavern, even in the most cosmopolitan surface cities. Even a drider with a neutral or good alignment (a stretch in itself) is disturbing to most folk, with its bizarre, arachnid appearance.

This doesn't mean you can't work out a plausible background for a drider character and fit it into your campaign. One that is neutral or chaotic neutral is most believable, perhaps feeding only on evil humanoids. Such a character could even be a weird vigilante, a few steps below even the maligned half-orc paladin who is mistrusted by those he protects. If the DM allows it, a drider dedicated to Eilistraee (from the FORGOTTEN REALMS *Campaign Setting*) might even aspire to throw off its curse through the divine intervention of the Dark Maiden, perhaps by completing a great quest.

NPC DRIDERS

Driders make good opponents, but they don't get along well with most of the other creatures the PCs are likely to encounter in the Underdark. A drider is typically the main villain in a small adventure or a side encounter in a large dungeon crawl. It sees the PCs as a meal foremost, but it might bargain if both sides are closely matched and the drider thinks it can use the party as pawns in its schemes.

An established drider could provide a different, stronger challenge to your PCs. One with additional cleric levels might have a small horde of undead servants and spider guardians. Such a powerful enemy doesn't send all of its minions into one encounter but stations them throughout its extensive lair. It might enslave a band of kobolds or goblins as a larder of live food, or work out some kind of arrangement with wererats, duergar, or derro to lure prey into its clutches. This kind of foe rarely parleys when faced with defeat but flees or fights to the death.

It is rare to find a drider in the service of another foe. It usually acts only as some kind of guardian or buffer against the outside world. Driders are dangerous to keep around, so only tough monsters, such as beholders or mind flayers, can keep them under control. Even so, if the PCs prove that they cannot be easily eaten, the drider might simply let them pass to fight its master, hoping to weaken all sides for its ultimate gain.

As a random encounter, driders often attack from ambush or track their prey over great distances to strike at an opportune moment. A hunting drider usually stalks alone to maximize surprise, but an ambusher might have some spider allies. Neither is looking to slay everyone it encounters; it would be satisfied with one or two kills.

ADVANCED DRIDERS

When adding character levels to a drider, remember that its favored class is drider, despite its former affinity for cleric (female) or wizard (male). Thus it faces some tough XP penalties when adding more than one class. This may not mean too much when creating an interesting foe, but it can be a problem for players who adopt a drider character. Even if it plans to advance in another class, a drider who casts as a cleric or wizard often takes one level of the associated class to gain access to 4th-level spells. *Air walk*, *giant vermin*, *lesser planar ally*, *poison*, *spell immunity*, and *summon monster IV* are good choices for clerics, while *dimension door*, *greater invisibility*, *polymorph*, and *stoneskin* are some of the best spells for a wizard. Since sorcerous driders have to attain two more levels to get these spells, they are more likely to concentrate on a new class.

Spellcaster Classes: Drider wizards and sorcerers may find it advantageous to take a few levels in cleric, and the reverse is also true. A drider that can choose from all of the spells and tactics listed above is a tougher opponent, but not overwhelming. Clerical driders who take wizard levels are penalized by smaller Hit Dice (d4), but an arcane drider who takes cleric levels continues to add d8s. Clerics taking sorcerer or wizard levels get useful arcane spells, while the arcane casters that take cleric levels gain undead minions and support spells, but additional levels produce diminishing returns. High-level multiclass drider spellcasters might consider the mystic theurge prestige class. Spellcasters should focus on the Concentration and Spellcraft skills; Brew Potion and Silent Spell are useful feats, while Spell Focus and Spell Penetration (as well as their greater forms) are vital for fighting drow.

Rogue: Taking levels in rogue is a popular choice since its class features and skills enhance a drider's existing talent for stealth. It's easy to sneak attack an opponent who is beating off monstrous spiders or is trapped by a *web* spell. Dodge and Mobility are good feats for drider rogues.

Martial Classes: Driders make mean fighters, with increased base attack bonuses and Hit Dice, and quick access to feats. The ranger class complements driders' hatred of drow, allowing them to specialize in hunting that prey. Since driders already have Two-Weapon Fighting, they gain more benefit from this class by choosing archery combat styles. Ranger levels also let a drider maximize its stealthy skills while getting the fighter's base attack progression. Dodge and Mobility are also good choices for fighters and rangers. D

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THE HEROES OF THE Spider

Sinister, cruel, and beautiful, the drow rule powerful cities in the Underdark, endlessly scheming against their rivals and the World Above. For thousands of years, the drow have spent their ambition and energy in the endless pursuit of station, climbing as high as their abilities and ruthlessness permit in accordance with the age-old dictates of their dark goddess Lolth. But for many months now, Lolth has refused the drow her divine power, and in the absence of her might and malice, the dark elves must rise or fall on their own. Lolth's silence continues, and the great cities of the drow burn with dissent and rebellion.

THE WAR OF THE SPIDER QUEEN

R.A. Salvatore's *War of the Spider Queen* series tells the story of a terrible crisis among the proud, cruel dark elves. Lolth answers no prayers, offers no signs, and bestows no spells upon her loyal priestesses. The first book of the series is *Dissolution*, by Richard Lee Byers. In it, several dark heroes (including Pharaun Mizzrym, a Master of Sorcere; Ryld Argith, a Master of Melee-Magthere; Quenthel Baenre, Mistress of Arach-Tinilith; Jeggred, her demonic kinsman; and Valas Hune, a scout) become embroiled in the effort to understand Lolth's absence.

Thomas Reid's *Insurrection* follows these champions of Menzoberranzan as they journey into the Underdark to establish contact with the nearby city of Ched Nasad, Menzoberranzan's tributary and rival. But the heroes discover that Ched Nasad is in an even worse state than Menzoberranzan. They barely escape the destruction of the city, aided by Halisstra Melarn (eldest daughter of House Melarn) and her maidservant Danifae, a battle-captive bound to Halisstra.

Condemnation (by yours truly) picks up the story of Menzoberranzan's champions and their new allies as they seek out the priest of a drow god, in the hope that another deity might provide the answers to Lolth's silence. While Quenthel and her companions search for the hidden House Jaelre, the enemies of Menzoberranzan emerge from the shadows. A secret House of assassins, known as the Jaezred Chaulssin, encourages the duergar of Gracklstugh and the tanarruks of Kaanyr Vhok to march against Menzoberranzan and entices House Agrach Dyrr—Fifth House of Menzoberranzan—to turn against the rest of the city.

Dyrr, the Lichdrow, was first described in the Menzoberranzan boxed set. The other characters detailed here (Ryld, Valas, and Halisstra) were created for the series.

The *War of the Spider Queen* series continues with Lisa Smedman's *Extinction* in January 2004 and Philip Athans's *Annihilation* in July 2004, then concludes with Mel Odom's *Resurrection* in January 2005. Look for full descriptions of the last of Menzoberranzan's champions and enemies in a future *Dragon* article.

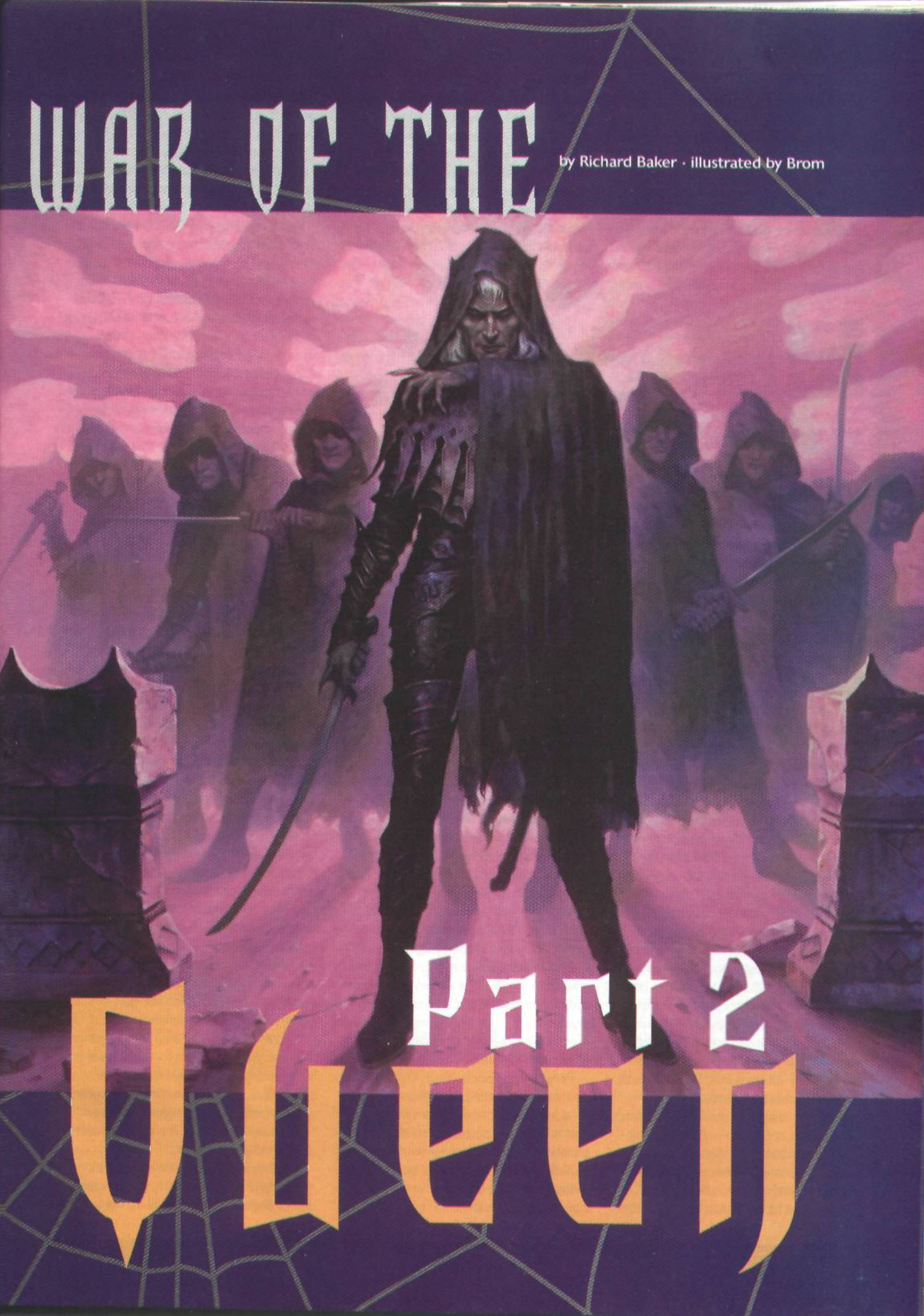
DYRR, THE LICHDROW

Almost two thousand years of age, the creature known as Dyrr is a formidable drow sorcerer who achieved immortality (of a sort) by becoming a lich more than a millennium ago. In his true form, Dyrr is a skeletal creature without a scrap of flesh remaining on his old yellow bones. Emerald flames dance in his empty eye sockets, and his voice is little more than a cold rasp. However, Dyrr prefers to conceal his unliving condition with a variety of illusory guises. Most often, he chooses to take the appearance of an ancient nobleman, a drow of exceptional age who leans on a great staff and wears his years heavily.

Like many drow lords, Dyrr is clever, confident, and deceitful. He is absolutely without physical fear, since his undead body can feel no pain and is difficult indeed to harm. Even should an enemy succeed in destroying his body, his malignant spirit would simply form another physical vessel in a short time. To completely and forever destroy Dyrr, an enemy would have to unravel centuries of

WAR OF THE

by Richard Baker · illustrated by Brom



Part 2

Queen

painstaking preparations, contingencies, and dark spells.

Dyrr has been around long enough to view even the most unpleasant developments in the endless House feuds as nothing more than minor twists in the course of history. Thus, he is quite patient and slow to confront his foes. He cultivates an urbane and unassuming manner, but beneath this veneer lies a masterful and arrogant creature that takes great umbrage at being thwarted.

He has raised and thrown down House matrons at his own pleasure and ensured the implementation of his will through those he has placed in power.

For centuries, Dyrr has been the preeminent power in House Agrach Dyrr. He has raised and thrown down House matrons at his own pleasure and ensured the implementation of his will through those he has placed in power. Until recently, Dyrr was content to give Lolth her due and let the House Matrons conduct Agrach Dyrr's affairs with only a little behind-the-scenes guidance from him. But Lolth's silence—an event not even the ancient lich has seen before—has caused him to re-evaluate the situation. Dyrr views Menzoberranzan's collapse as inevitable in the current circumstances, so the Lichdrow has decided to take active steps to ensure that Agrach Dyrr, the House he has guided for a thousand years, will survive the culling to come.

Dyrr: Male drow lich Sorcerer 22/Wizard 3/Cleric 1 (Velsharoon); CR 29; Medium undead (elf); HD 22d12 plus 3d12 plus 1d12; hp 169; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 42, touch 24, flat-footed 36; Base Atk +13; Grp +16; Atk +16 melee touch (1d8+5 plus paralysis, paralyzing touch) or +19 ranged touch (by spell) or +20 melee (1d6+8 plus 2d6 lawful, *staff of mastery*); Full Atk +16/+11/+6 melee touch (1d8+5 plus paralysis, paralyzing touch) or +19 ranged touch (by spell) or +20/+15/+10 melee (1d6+8 plus 2d6 lawful, *staff of mastery*); SA fear aura, paralyzing touch, rebuke undead (18/day, +11 damage), spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 15/bludgeoning and magic, darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, immunities (ability damage to physical ability scores, ability drain, cold, critical hits, disease, death effects, death from massive damage, electricity, energy drain, exhaustion, fatigue, mind-affecting effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep effects, stunning, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless), spell resistance 37, turn resistance +4, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +17, Ref +23, Will +26; Str 17, Dex 22, Con —, Int 20, Wis 16, Cha 32.

Skills and Feats: Appraise (alchemical items) +7, Balance +12, Bluff +21, Concentration +39, Craft (alchemy) +13, Diplomacy +28, Hide +28, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Listen +19, Move Silently +23, Search +19, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +34, Spot +16; Arcane Preparation, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Greater Spell Focus (Necromancy), Greater Spell Penetration, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Penetration.

Drow Traits: Dyrr is immune to magic *sleep* spells and effects. He gains a +2 racial bonus on saves against enchantment spells or effects, a +2 racial bonus on Will saves against spells or spell-like abilities, and a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks (already figured into the statistics given above). He is entitled to a Search check when within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door as though actively looking for it. As a drow, Dyrr also has light blindness (blinded for 1 round by abrupt exposure to bright light; dazzled on each subsequent round that he remains in bright light).

Fear Aura (Su): Each creature with less than 5 Hit Dice within a 60-foot radius that looks at Dyrr must succeed on a DC 34 Will save or be affected as though by a *fear* spell (caster level 26th).

Paralyzing Touch (Su): Any living creature Dyrr strikes with his touch attack must succeed on a DC 34 Fortitude save or be permanently paralyzed. The effect cannot be dispelled, but the victim can be freed by *remove paralysis* or any spell that can remove a curse.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire.* Caster level 26th.

Turn Resistance (Ex): Dyrr is treated as a 30-HD undead for the purpose of turn, rebuke, command, or bolster attempts.

Undead Traits: Dyrr is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects or is harmless. He is not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage to his physical ability scores, ability drain, energy drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or death from massive damage. He cannot be raised, and resurrection works only if he is willing.

Cleric Spells Prepared (3/3; save DC 13 + spell level or 15 + spell level for Necromancy spells): 0—*cure minor wounds, guidance, mending;* 1st—*deathwatch, detect undead*, sanctuary.* Dyrr reserves most of his clerical spells for conversion to *inflict* spells to heal himself.

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Death (death touch 1/day), Undeath (free Extra Turning feat).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/9/9/9/14/8/8/8/7/7; save DC 21 + spell level or 23 + spell level for Necromancy spells): 0—*acid splash, daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, light, mage hand, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*color spray, detect secret doors, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield;* 2nd—*alter self, invisibility, resist energy, scorching ray, see invisibility;* 3rd—*dispel magic, fly, haste, lightning bolt;* 4th—*detect scrying, enervation, greater invisibility, polymorph;* 5th—*cone of cold, hold monster, summon monster V, teleport;* 6th—*analyze dweomer, circle of death, true seeing;* 7th—*finger of death, limited wish, plane shift;* 8th—*horrid wilting, mind blank, summon monster VIII;* 9th—*energy drain, imprisonment, wish.*

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/4/2; save DC 15 + spell level or 17 + spell level for Necromancy spells): 0—*arcane mark, flare, open/close, prestidigitation;* 1st—*comprehend languages, disguise self, erase, protection from chaos;* 2nd—*detect thoughts, knock.*

Spellbook: 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare,*

ghost sound, launch bolt, light, mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*alarm, charm person, comprehend languages, disguise self, endure elements, erase, expeditious retreat, hold portal, identify, mage armor, Nystul's magic aura, protection from chaos, protection from evil, protection from good, protection from law, silent image, spirit worm*, true strike;* 2nd—*arcane lock, detect thoughts, eagle's splendor, knock, levitate, locate object, minor image, misdirection, obscure object, shadow mask***. Dyrr is studiously tracking down low-level arcane spells that he does not know as sorcerer spells in order to broaden his repertoire.

* *Magic of Faerûn* spell.

** *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* spell.

Languages Known: Abyssal, Common, Drow Sign Language, Elven, Undercommon.

Possessions: *Dyrr's impervious vestment, crown of sorcerous terror, staff of mastery, spiteful imp, ring of protection +5, ring of wizardry IV, belt of giant strength +4, gloves of Dexterity +6, piwafwi of resistance +5, glove of storing, boots of elvenkind, drow house insignia, wand of inflict critical wounds,* lich's phylactery, *mirror of mental prowess,* spellbook of copper sheet and bone leaves. Dyrr has also collected many other minor magic items in his long centuries of existence. The DM is free to assign these as desired.

Dyrr's Unique Items

Over dozens of centuries of life and unlife, Dyrr has amassed a number of powerful and useful magic items, several of which he crafted himself. His signature items include the *crown of sorcerous terror* (a device that enhances his Charisma and improves his defensive capability), *Dyrr's impervious vestment* (robes that protect him better than full plate armor), a *spiteful imp* (an animated buckler that can spit venom), and the *staff of mastery,* a mighty weapon of law with formidable powers.

Crown of Sorcerous Terror: Forged in the shape of a rearing serpentine dragon with its wings outspread, this adamantine circlet is imbued with powerful evil magic. It confers a +6 enhancement bonus to the wearer's Charisma and adds a +3 profane bonus to his Armor Class and saving throws.

The *crown of sorcerous terror* also possesses the ability to absorb single-target and ray effects in much the same fashion as the *rod of absorption.* However, this item stores captured spells intact instead of converting them into spell energy. The wearer of the crown may cast a captured spell from it as a standard action, exactly as if using a spell trigger device containing a spell on his spell list.

The crown can store ten captured spell levels at a time. It does not capture any portion of a spell that it does not have the capacity to absorb in full.

Forged in the shape of a rearing serpentine dragon with its wings outspread, this adamantine circlet is imbued with powerful evil magic.

The *crown of sorcerous terror* is an intensely evil item, and any nonevil character who dons it gains four negative levels. While these negative levels never result in actual level loss, they remain in effect as long as the crown is worn and cannot be overcome in any way (including via *restoration* spells).

Strong abjuration, evocation, and transmutation; CL 13th; Craft Wondrous Item, *eagle's splendor, spell turning, unhallow;* Price 200,000 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

Piwafwi of Resistance +5: This black cloak grants the wearer a +5 resistance bonus on all saving throws and a +10 bonus on Hide checks.

Strong abjuration and illusion; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *invisibility, resistance;* Price 30,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Drow House Insignia: This brooch is worked in the design of a noble house's symbol. It allows the wearer to levitate as if she had cast *levitate* on herself. The house insignia may be worn anywhere and does not occupy an item slot.

Faint transmutation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *levitate;* Price 15,000 gp.

Dyrr's Impervious Vestment: This black silk robe embroidered with darksteel thread in an elegant waterfall pattern confers a +9 armor bonus on its wearer. Once per day as a full-round action, the vestment can be commanded to create a *blade barrier* effect (caster level 18th) that deals 15d6 points of damage. The spot where the vestment's wearer is standing becomes the central point of the effect. Once invoked, the barrier cannot be moved. The wearer may move about freely after the barrier is created and can even pass through it without harm, but the effect ends 1 round after the wearer leaves the area it encompasses. Otherwise, the barrier lasts until the wearer dismisses it (a standard action) or for 180 minutes.

Strong conjuration and evocation; CL 18th; Craft Wondrous Item, *blade barrier, mage armor;* Price 120,000 gp; Weight 3 lbs.

Spiteful Imp: Forged in the shape of an imp's face grinning in malicious glee, this small mithral shield is a *+4 animated buckler.* Once per day, the wearer can command it to spit burning venom. The venomous spittle requires a ranged touch attack at the wielder's ranged attack bonus. Its range is 30 feet, and it deals 1d4+6 points of fire damage. Like a *poison* spell, the venom also deals 1d10 points of Constitution damage (Fort DC 17 negates) and an additional 1d10 points of Constitution damage 1 minute later. The *spiteful imp* also has an unusual tendency to titter in evil mirth whenever it deflects an opponent's weapon—a disquieting but otherwise harmless quality.

Strong evocation, necromancy, and transmutation; CL 12th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *animate objects, poison, produce flame;* Price 46,245 gp; Weight 3 lbs.

Staff of Mastery: Wrought from four twisted rods of adamantine, one end of this weapon functions as a *+4 lawful staff of knockback.* The other end of the staff is nonmagical.

In addition to its potent properties as a weapon, the *staff of mastery* allows the use of the following spells with the indicated charge expenditures.

- *Hold person* (1 charge)
- *Dimensional anchor* (1 charge)
- *Repulsion* (2 charges)
- *Dominate monster* (3 charges)

After all its charges have been used

up, the *staff of mastery* remains a *+4 lawful staff of knockback*.

Strong abjuration, enchantment, and evocation; CL 17th; Craft Staff, *dimensional anchor, dominate monster, hold person, order's wrath, repulsion*, creator must be lawful; Price 275,000 gp.

RYLD ARGITH, MASTER OF MELEE-MAGTHERE

Raised in the squalor of Menzoberranzan's worst neighborhoods, Ryld Argith was born to fight. Abandoned by his mother to the nonexistent mercy of Braeryn's streets, he learned early to rely on wits, stealth, and speed to make his way in the world. Ryld grew into a strapping young cutthroat with a reputation as a lightning-quick brawler. By his twentieth birthday, he had survived a half-dozen knife-fights and was well on his way to becoming a callous thug or killer for hire.

. . . Ryld began his studies with nothing more than natural strength, quickness, and a sort of feral cunning in his favor . . .

Ryld might never have left the wretchedness of Stenchstreets were it not for a chance meeting with Szarr'tham Ilplarl, the weapons master of a minor merchant House. While drunk, one of Szarr'tham's students started a brawl that ended with his death at Ryld's hands, and Szarr'tham came looking for the slayer of his kinsman a few days later. He gave the young drow his first real lesson in swordplay, but in the process of cutting him to pieces, Szarr'tham recognized a glimmer of true potential in the youth. So instead of killing him, the Ilplarl Weapons Master dragged Ryld to Tier-Breche and enrolled him in the fighter's school of Melee-Magthere. Szarr'tham might have intended to take Ryld into his House's service after the youth completed his training at the Academy, or the elder drow might have simply been moved to make sure a young talent did not go to waste. Whatever the reason for Szarr'tham's action, however, Ryld never saw him again—the weapons master died in a House feud a few months later.

Wild, unschooled, and unmannered, Ryld began his studies with nothing more than natural strength, quickness, and a sort of feral cunning in his favor, but the discipline of the blade instantly captivated the young drow. Ryld threw himself into his studies with single-minded determination and quickly became one of the top students in his class. After ten years, when most of the students had concluded their studies and returned to their Houses to put their swords at the service of their matrons, Ryld simply remained at Melee-Magthere and continued to study, since he had no home worth returning to. Eventually, he left the Academy to take up service in some of the hardest mercenary companies and merchant Houses of the city. For the next several decades, he roamed throughout the Underdark, honing his skills in the service of others.

In time, Ryld returned to Menzoberranzan and Tier-Breche and won a place as a Master of the school in which he had learned his bladework. During this time, he made the acquaintance of Pharaun Mizzrym, the Master of Sorcere. The two became close comrades and shared many dark adventures.

Ryld is tall and broadly built for an elf (let alone a male drow), and he keeps his hair cropped close to his skull. Compared to the noble-born drow of the city, he is dour, pragmatic, and simple in both clothing and manners. He favors heavier weapons and armor than those most drow would choose, and he owns a deadly magic greatsword called Splitter that he can wield with the quickness and grace of a born duelist.

Ryld Argith: Male drow Rogue 2/Fighter 15; CR 18; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 2d6+10 plus 15d10+75; hp 174; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 28, touch 14, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +16; Grp +24; Atk +31 melee (2d6+19/17-20, *Splitter*) or +27 melee (1d6+11/19-20, *+3 ghost touch short sword*) or +23 ranged (1d8+3/19-20, *+2 light crossbow* with *+3 bolts*); Full Atk +31/+26/+21/+16 melee (2d6+19/17-20, *Splitter*) or +27/+22/+17/+12 melee (1d6+11/19-20, *+3 ghost touch short sword*) or +23 ranged (1d8+3/19-20, *+2 light crossbow* with *+3 bolts*); SA sneak attack +1d6, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, evasion, spell resistance 28, trapfinding; AL CN; SV Fort +18, Ref +16, Will +11; Str 26, Dex 18, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Appraise (armor) +5, Balance +9, Climb +18, Craft (armorsmithing) +11, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +6, Handle Animal +5, Heal +4, Hide +19, Intimidate +6, Jump +23, Listen +9, Move Silently +14, Ride +14, Search +10, Sense Motive +5, Spot +17, Swim +14; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Whirlwind Attack.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire*. Caster level 17th.

Drow Traits: Ryld is immune to magic *sleep* spells and effects. He gains a +2 racial bonus on saves against enchantment spells or effects, a +2 racial bonus on Will saves against spells or spell-like abilities, and a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks (already figured into the statistics given above). He is entitled to a Search check when within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door as though actively looking for it. As a drow, Ryld also has light blindness (blinded for 1 round by abrupt exposure to bright light; dazzled on each subsequent round that he remains in bright light).

Evasion (Ex): If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, Ryld takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Languages Known: Common, Drow Sign Language, Elven, Goblin, Undercommon.

Possessions: *Splitter (+5 keen superior dispelling greatsword), +3 ghost touch short sword, +2 light crossbow, 50 +3 bolts, +5 mithral breastplate of lightning resistance and silent moves, piwafwi of resistance +4, master's ring, belt of giant strength +6, gauntlets of Dexterity +4, boots of speed, drow house insignia, portable hole*, backpack, bedroll, and routine supplies.

Ryld's Unique Items

While Ryld does not have the resources and treasures of a great House at his disposal, he has acquired a number of interesting and unique items during the course of his adventures.

Master's Ring: The most talented and capable masters of Melee-Magthere aspire to win one of these greatly prized rings. Wrought in the pattern of a small twisting dragon, a *master's ring* provides a +6 enhancement bonus to Constitution and +4 natural armor bonus. Furthermore, the wearer is continuously under the effect of a *longstrider* spell, which increases his base land speed by 10 feet.

Strong transmutation; CL 13th; Forge Ring, *bear's endurance, limited wish, longstrider;* Price 102,000 gp.

Piwafwi of Resistance +4: This black cloak grants the wearer a +4 resistance bonus on all saving throws and a +10 bonus on Hide checks.

Strong abjuration and illusion; CL 12th; Craft Wondrous Item, *invisibility, resistance;* Price 20,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Superior Dispelling: A superior dispelling weapon allows the wielder to use *dispel magic* as a standard action in a 5-foot radius centered on the wielder (caster level equals wielder's character level). The item grants only the use of the area dispel function of the spell, not the targeted dispel or counterspell functions.

Moderate abjuration; CL 11th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *greater dispel magic;* Price +3 bonus.

VALAS HUNE OF THE BREGAN D'AERTHE

Like Ryld Argith, Valas Hune rose from humble origins. He is a commoner from a so-called "merchant House"—a small clan or extended family that practices a particular trade. Some of Menzoberranzan's merchant Houses are actually guilds of craftsmen or skilled professionals, but House Orlzz'Hune was a true mercantile enterprise. Its members organized trade caravans to various nearby cities in the Underdark, trading drow craftwork for the goods produced by Menzoberranzan's neighbors.

Valas spent many decades engaged in the family business, escorting caravans throughout the Underdark. This occupation gave him plenty of opportunity to hone his fighting skills, learn the ways of other races, and become intimately familiar with the Underdark for hundreds of miles around.

About one hundred years ago, House Orlzz'Hune encountered disaster in the Underdark. Valas and a dozen of his kinfolk were leading a caravan through the region known as the Labyrinth when a great band of minotaur marauders set upon them. Although the Hunes fought desperately, they were swept away, and Valas escaped only by fleeing alone into the darkness after all his companions had fallen. Although he was without food or supplies, Valas Hune survived the Labyrinth, deciphering the riddle of its mazelike passages and evading one hungry monster after another. He eventually found his way to the hidden refuge of House Jaelre, a male-dominated House of Vhaeraun worshipers who had been exiled from Menzoberranzan long ago.

Valas remained among the Jaelre for several months, repaying them for their assistance by contributing his sword and his skills to their defense. While there, he befriended the cleric Tzirik. Eventually, however, Valas decided to return to his kinfolk, so he struck out on the path toward home, joining first one caravan and then another to work his way back to Menzoberranzan. But when he finally reached the city, he discovered that the loss of the caravan had left Orlzz'Hune impoverished and defenseless, and its rivals had lost no time in wiping it out.

Fearing for his life, Valas decided to become a sellsword and joined the Bregan D'aerthe mercenary company, hoping to disappear among other Houseless males. His skill at stealth and handiness with a blade impressed the mercenaries, and he flourished in their company. The organizational and leadership skills that he had learned in his former House served him well, and he rose quickly among the Bregan D'aerthe.

Valas is a small, quiet drow who is ever cautious and alert. He feels more at home roaming the subterranean wilderness of the Underdark than he does navigating the treacherous intrigues of Menzoberranzan. Valas wears a number of charms and trinkets produced by nondrow Underdark races. These ornaments appear uncouth and ugly to most of his fellow dark elves, but several have useful magic powers. He fights with a pair of kukris but prefers to kill from a distance with a composite shortbow.

MAGIC OF THE REALMS

Some of the magic items and magic item qualities in this article have been taken from *Magic of Faerûn* (for more information see that book). They have been reprinted here for your convenience.

ARMOR QUALITY

Nimbleness: This type of armor feels lighter and less restrictive than other armor of its type. While the actual weight is unchanged, the maximum Dexterity bonus increases by +2 and the armor check penalty decreases by 1.

WEAPON QUALITIES

Impact: Any bludgeoning weapon enhanced by this ability has its threat range doubled. For example, a quarterstaff thus enhanced scores a threat on a 19-20, and a heavy flail scores a threat on a 17-20. This enhancement does not affect piercing or slashing weapons.

Knockback: A weapon enhanced by this property has the ability to drive its targets back. On a successful hit, the target of the attack must succeed at a DC 19 Fortitude save or be knocked back 10 feet. (If the target can't move back 10 feet, it instead falls to the ground.) If the first save fails, the target must succeed at another DC 19 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round.

Quick-Loading: This property can only be placed on a crossbow. A quick-loading crossbow accesses an extradimensional space that can hold up to 100 bolts, allowing the wielder to reload the crossbow more rapidly than normal. Reloading a quick-loading hand or light crossbow is a free action (allowing a character with multiple attacks to use his full attack rate), while reloading a quick-loading heavy crossbow is a move-equivalent action. Adding or removing a bolt by hand from the extradimensional space requires a move-equivalent action. Different types of bolts can be held in the extradimensional space, and the wielder may select freely from these when reloading the crossbow.

WONDROUS ITEM

Instrument of the Bards (Cli Lyre): This masterwork lyre (+2 bonus on Perform [lyre] checks) bestows 1 negative level on any character who does not have at least 10 ranks in Perform (lyre) (if that character tries to use the lyre). A character with at least 10 ranks in Perform (lyre) can use the instrument to cast *break enchantment, dimension door,* and *shout* once per day. It gives a +5 competence bonus on a bard's bardic music checks for countersong, *fascinate,* and *suggestion.*

Valas Hune: Male drow Rogue 10/Ranger 2/Fighter 4; CR 17; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 10d6+20 plus 2d8+4 plus 4d10+8; hp 98; Init +12; Spd 30 ft.; AC 32, touch 21, flat-footed 32; Base Atk +13; Grp +17; Atk +25 melee (1d4+9 plus 1d6 electricity/15-20 plus 1d10 electricity, *+3 keen shocking burst kukri*) or +24 ranged (1d6+5/x3, *+2 composite shortbow* [+2 Str bonus] with *+3 arrows*); Full Atk +23/+18/+13 melee (1d4+9 plus 1d6 electricity/15-20 plus 1d10 electricity, *+3 keen shocking burst kukri*) and +23 melee (1d4+7/18-20, *+3 defending kukri*); or +24/+19/+14 ranged (1d6+5/x3, *+2 composite shortbow* [+2 Str bonus] with *+3 arrows*); SA sneak attack +5d6, spell-like abilities; SQ combat style (two-weapon combat), darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, evasion, favored enemy (aberrations +2), improved uncanny dodge, opportunist, spell resistance 27, trap sense +3, trapfinding, uncanny dodge, wild empathy +1; AL N; SV Fort +19, Ref +26, Will +15; Str 19, Dex 27, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Balance +16, Climb +21, Decipher Script +10, Disable Device +16, Escape Artist +21, Hide +38, Jump +15, Knowledge (local—the Underdark) +8, Listen +17, Move Silently +28, Search +11, Speak Language (Aquan, Draconic, Orc), Spot +21, Survival +16, Swim +7, Tumble +19, Use Rope +10; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Track, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (kukri), Weapon Specialization (kukri).

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire.* Caster level 16th.

Combat Style: Valas has chosen two-weapon combat as his combat style.

Drow Traits: Valas is immune to magic *sleep* spells and effects. He gains a +2 racial bonus on saves against enchantment spells or effects, a +2 racial bonus on Will saves against spells or spell-like abilities, and a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks (already figured into the statistics given above). He is entitled to a Search check when within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door as though actively looking for it. As a drow, Valas also has light blindness (blinded for 1 round by abrupt exposure to bright light; dazzled on each subsequent round that he remains in bright light).

Evasion (Ex): If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, Valas takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Favored Enemy: Valas has selected aberrations as a favored enemy. He gains a +2 bonus on his Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against this type of creature. He gets the same bonus on weapon damage rolls against creatures of this type.

Opportunist: Once per round, Valas can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent that has just been struck for damage in melee by another character. This attack counts as his attack of opportunity for that round.

Trap Sense (Ex): Valas has a +3 bonus on Reflex saves made to avoid traps and a +3 bonus to AC against attacks made by traps.

Wild Empathy (Ex): This ability functions just like a Diplomacy check to improve the attitude of a person, except that it works against animals. Valas and the animal must be within 30 feet of one another and able to see each other. This ability can also be used to influence a magical beast with an Intelligence score of 1 or 2 at a -4 penalty on the check.

Languages Known: Aquan, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon.

Possessions: *+3 keen shocking burst kukri, +3 defending kukri, +2 composite shortbow* (+2 Str bonus), *50 +3 arrows, +5 mithral chain shirt of silent moves and nimbleness, belt of strength +4, bracers of health +2, vest of dexterity +6, ring of protection +3, Valas Hune's piwafwi, the nine-pointed star, ring of natural armor +2, hand of glory, stone of alarm, ring of speed, Heward's handy haversack.*

Valas Hune's Unique Items

Valas is nothing if not pragmatic, and he possesses several charms and trinkets that few other drow would wear.

Valas Hune's Piwafwi: Crafted especially for the most skillful scouts among the dark elves, this cloak grants the wearer a +4 resistance bonus on all saving throws and a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks.

Strong abjuration and illusion; CL 12th; Craft Wondrous Item, *invisibility, resistance;* Price 25,000 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

The Nine-Pointed Star: This unique brooch looks like a star with nine points, and it is made from common tin. It confers a +3 luck bonus on the wearer's saving throws. In addition, the wearer may use *dimension door* to move a total of 760 feet per day. This distance need not be expended in a single use, but each activation of the power requires a standard action.

Moderate conjuration and enchantment; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *dimension door, prayer;* Price 63,000 gp.

Ring of Speed: On command, this ring enables the wearer to act as though affected by a *haste* spell for up to 10 rounds each day. The duration of the *haste* effect need not be consecutive rounds.

Moderate transmutation; CL 10th; Forge Ring, *haste;* Price 12,000 gp.

HALISSTRA MELARN
First Daughter of House Melarn

Trained from childhood to rule, Halisstra is the eldest daughter of the Matron of House Melarn in Ched Nasad. As the focus of her mother's designs for the future of her House and city, she was subjected to the same sort of upbringing that any other drow heir-apparent would receive in similar circumstances. The Matron pushed her daughter relentlessly to be smarter, tougher, and more ruthless than anyone around her, and yet from time to time would indulge her with lavish pampering. The gift of the battle-captive Danifae to serve as Halisstra's maidservant was one example of such indulgence.

House Melarn was somewhat unusual among great Houses in that it kept alive a very ancient drow custom—the tradition of the bae'qeshel telphraezzar, or Whisperers of the Dark Queen. As a girl, Halisstra was chosen to spend many long years studying the bae'qeshel lore and learning how to raise the ancient keening songs of the drow race. The bae'qeshel tradition dates back to the long-lost days when the drow were known as the Ilythiiri and ruled great surface realms. For uncounted generations, House Melarn has trained at least one daughter in the bae'qeshel tradition while also schooling her as a priestess of the Spider Queen.

The fall of House Melarn during the events of *Insurrection* has left Halisstra a rootless wanderer. Instead of a

Matron-to-be, she is now the weakest and most wretched of creatures—an outcast dark elf. The Underdark shows little pity to Houseless drow, and even though Halisstra was well schooled in the cruel lessons of a nobleborn drow lady, she knows that she must be stronger and more clever than ever before to avoid a life in chains or a horrible death alone in the dark. Bitter and grieved by the loss of the high station that should have been hers, Halisstra has had no choice but to throw in with the Menzoberranyr who heralded her city's destruction.

Halisstra is unusually tall and slender for a drow. She lacks the voluptuous sensuality of many nobleborn drow women, but she is quite graceful and possesses an austere beauty of her own. Unlike many of her peers, Halisstra views cruelty and excess as tools to be used with care, not ends in their own right, and she has always feared that she does not have the same sort of iron strength that her mother possessed in abundance. She wears the arms of House Melarn—an enchanted suit of chainmail emblazoned with the emblem of her House.

Halisstra: Female drow Bard 8/Cleric 10 (Lolth); CR 19; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 8d6+16 plus 10d8+20; hp 109; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 36, touch 20, flat-footed 30; Base Atk +13; Grp +16; Atk +22 melee (1d8+8/19-20 plus 1d8 sonic, *+5 thundering heavy mace of impact*) or +24 ranged (1d8+4/19-20, *+2 quick-loading light crossbow* with *+4 crossbow bolts*); Full Atk +22/+17/+12 melee (1d8+8/19-20 plus 1d8 sonic, *+5 thundering heavy mace of impact*) or +24/+19/+14 ranged (1d8+4/19-20, *+2 quick-loading light crossbow* with *+4 crossbow bolts*); SA rebuke undead (9/day, +8 damage), spell-like abilities; SQ bardic knowledge +11, bardic music (countersong, *fascinate*, inspire competence, inspire courage +2, *suggestion*) 8/day, darkvision 120 ft., drow traits, spell resistance 29; AL CN; SV Fort +15, Ref +20, Will +23; Str 16, Dex 24, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 23, Cha 22.

Skills and Feats: Balance +8, Bluff +17, Concentration +23, Decipher Script +14, Diplomacy +23, Heal +16, Hide +29, Intimidate +8, Jump +4, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +13, Move Silently +13, Perform (lyre) +20, Search +5, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +13, Spot +16, Swim +3, Tumble +17; Greater Spell Penetration, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Penetration, Stealthy, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (heavy mace).

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire*. Caster level 18th.

> Unlike many of her peers, Halisstra views cruelty and excess as tools to be used with care, not ends in their own right . . .

Bardic Knowledge: Halisstra may make a bardic knowledge check with a bonus of +11 to see whether she knows some relevant information about local notable people, legendary items, or noteworthy places.

Drow Traits: Halisstra is immune to magic *sleep* spells and effects. She gains a +2 racial bonus on saves against enchantment spells or effects, a +2 racial bonus on Will saves against spells or spell-like abilities, and a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks (already figured into the statistics given above). She is entitled to a Search check when within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door as though actively looking for it. As a drow, Halisstra also has light blindness (blinded for 1 round by abrupt exposure to bright light; dazzled on each subsequent round that she remains in bright light).

Bard Spells Known (3/5/5/2; save DC 16 + spell level or 17 + spell level for Enchantment spells): 0—*daze, detect magic, light, mage hand, open/close, read magic;* 1st—*charm person, cure light wounds, expeditious retreat, silent image;* 2nd—*cure moderate wounds, invisibility, see invisibility, sound burst;* 3rd—*charm monster, dispel magic, remove curse.*

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/6+1/6+1/4+1/4+1/3+1; save DC 16 + spell level or 17 + spell level for Enchantment spells): None. During the events described in the *War of the Spider Queen* series, Halisstra does not receive spells from Lolth and cannot prepare any of her spells.

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Chaos (cast chaos spells at +1 caster level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills as cleric).

Possessions: *+5 thundering heavy mace of impact, +2 quick-loading light crossbow, 50 +4 bolts, +4 mithral large shield, arms of House Melarn, gloves of Dexterity +6, amulet of health +6, headband of Wisdom +4, Halisstra's comb, ring of protection +4, piwafwi of resistance +4, boots of elvenkind, instrument of the bards (Cli lyre), ring of evasion, wand of improved invisibility, wand of cure serious wounds, Heward's handy haversack, drow house insignia,* backpack, bedroll, and routine supplies.

Halisstra's Unique Items

As the eldest daughter of a great House, Halisstra enjoys tremendous personal wealth and has used it to outfit herself with the finest weapons, armor, and magic items. Her instrument of the bards is a small lyre made of dragonbone, with strings of mithral wire.

Arms of House Melarn: Traditionally worn by the firstborn daughter of Ched Nasad's House Melarn, this armor is a suit of *+5 elven chainmail of nimbleness* that also grants the wearer a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength. The nimbleness property raises the maximum Dexterity bonus of the armor to +6 and reduces the armor check penalty to -1.

Strong transmutation; CL 12th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bull's strength, cat's grace;* Price 85,300 gp; Weight 20 lbs.

Halisstra's Comb: This jet comb is normally worn pinned in the hair. It provides its wearer with a +4 enhancement bonus to Charisma and does not take up an item slot.

Moderate transmutation; CL 8th; Craft Wondrous Item, *eagle's splendor;* Price 32,000 gp.

Piwafwi of Resistance +4: This black cloak grants the wearer a +4 resistance bonus on all saving throws and a +10 circumstance bonus on Hide checks.

Strong abjuration and illusion; CL 12th; Craft Wondrous Item, *invisibility, resistance;* Price 20,000 gp; Weight 1 lb. D

For more heroes of the War of the Spider Queen, see part 1 of this series in *Dragon* #302. Purchase it online at www.paizo.com/backissues.

The Play's the Thing

ONLINE GAMING
GET IN THE GAME!

by Michael Blake

Are you a frustrated player who hasn't been able to find a game in your area? Maybe you once had a great gaming group, but then you moved away, or your friends did. Maybe you just live in a place where gaming isn't that popular, or you haven't found the right group, or the right game. Or maybe you're forced to play in a game you're not thrilled with because it's the only one you've been able to find. If the foregoing describes your situation, don't despair! Let the Internet come to your rescue!

If you're a Dungeon Master in search of players, or rules information, or even game material developed by other DMs, the Internet can be one of your best assets, as well. You'll find plenty of discussion groups where you can ask other DMs questions about the spirit or application of certain rules, or you can bounce your new ideas off other gamers. You can even swap funny stories about players or scenarios, and if you want some new ideas for an adventure—or even a whole campaign—the Internet is definitely the place to go.

The Internet is changing the landscape of roleplaying games. Players and DMs all over the world are playing together in ongoing campaigns—not around a table, but in front of their own computers. It doesn't matter that they're in completely different locations—maybe even in different countries—they can still connect via the Internet to pursue their favorite hobby. That means you no longer have to live near lots of other players to find a good game—in fact, you don't even have to leave your house. If you're willing to do a little research, you can almost certainly find a game that suits your own playing preferences, personality, and schedule.

GETTING STARTED

Okay, so I want to find a game online. What do I do first?

Hardware

To start with, you need the basic equipment—a computer and some kind of connection to the Internet. Most online video games now require a super-fast PC and a high-speed broadband Internet connection, but for online roleplaying an older computer and a regular phone modem will do. As for Internet services, the base cost is in the neighborhood of $10 per month. Thus, the entry cost is minimal, particularly if you have your own computer. If you don't, you can probably get access to one at a library, school computer lab, or Internet café.

Software

Next you need some software. The good news is that most of the software you need is either free or of negligible cost. If the items you want didn't come preloaded on your PC, you can probably download them from home.

First and foremost, you need a browser. The two most popular browsers for Windows are Internet Explorer 6.0 and Netscape Communicator. Both are also available for the Macintosh, and there are other browsers as well.

You should also make sure you have some sort of email software, such as Outlook Express, so that you can send and receive email, although you can use your browser if you prefer. With a browser and an email program, you can find games and communicate with players and DMs on the most basic level.

You might also want to get an instant messaging (IM) program so that you can "chat" with other people in real time over the Internet. Using IMs is like passing notes to one another at the gaming table—no one can see them except you and the person you're talking with. IMs are very useful for setting up games and managing in-game information flow. In fact, certain kinds of online games actually require them. In addition, IM programs let you see when other people in your gaming group (or even your family) are online, so that you can initiate conversations with them (with their permission, of course). Again, the good news is that many IM programs are available free of charge. Some of the most popular are Microsoft Instant Messenger (included with Windows), Yahoo Instant Messenger, and ICQ (owned by America Online).

Borders Illustrated by David Wahlstrom

Chat programs are relatives of IM programs. They function similarly, except that you can "chat" with other people only when you enter the same "space" in the virtual world (often called a chat room, or maybe a channel). The most popular such program is mIRC. This one is a bit tougher to use than most IM programs, but it is very stable and very popular. Some chat programs (such as the one used on the Wizards of the Coast website) even let you roll virtual dice so that the other players and the DM can all see the results.

FINDING A GAME

Okay, I'm wired. Now what?

Now that you have the necessary hardware and software, and you've messed around with it enough to figure out how it works, it's time to look for a game! First, you have to decide what kind of online game format you want. Your two basic choices are live chat and play-by-post.

A live chat game is one in which you, the other players, and the DM agree to "meet" online, either in a chat room or via an instant messaging program. The messages you type to screen are visible to all the participants, just as comments you make aloud in a face-to-face game can be heard by everyone at the table. This type of game takes place in "real time"—that is, everyone must be online at the same time, and all the participants can see and respond to each other's messages immediately.

In a play-by-post game, you post your character's actions to the rest of the group, either by email or on a message board of some kind. These games tend to take longer because responses aren't immediate, but they also don't require everyone to maintain a rigid schedule.

Once you've made that decision, try checking out the various websites that are specifically dedicated to connecting DMs with players. Or pay a visit to Yahoo and look over the "groups" (basically online clubs) dedicated to D&D and other games. You can probably find groups who play with the version of the rules that you prefer. (Yes, there are even groups playing the old Basic D&D and the original Chainmail online.) Advertising your availability on newsgroups can also be very effective. See the Where to Find Players and DMs sidebar for a list of newsgroups that you can access through your browser or email program.

DM Wanted

If you're a player, you can begin by either introducing yourself to one or more broad online roleplaying communities (Wizards of the Coast hosts one at **www.wizards.com**) or by identifying specific ongoing campaigns and contacting their participants directly.

If you contact a roleplaying community (say a Yahoo group, or one of the message boards on the Wizards of the Coast website), be specific about the kind of game you want. That way you'll maximize your responses and minimize the time you waste talking to people whose games won't interest you. Be sure to mention the following:

- How experienced a gamer you are.
- What game system you're comfortable with.
- What level of play you prefer.
- When you can reliably be available to play.
- Whether you want a live chat game or a play-by-post game.

To try to get into a specific gaming group, you first need to locate a campaign that interests you. Try checking out the websites of games that have been mentioned on roleplaying boards or in the newsgroups you've contacted, or just use your browser to search. Often the DM posts a storyline and maps on the campaign website, and sometimes players post information about their characters there as well. Access to this kind of information lets you decide whether the game interests you or not.

Once you've zeroed in on one you like, you must contact the players or DM directly. Although this

WHERE TO FIND PLAYERS AND DMS

There are lots of places on the Internet to find games. The list below offers some good places to start looking for a game or to recruit players for your own online campaign.

WEBSITES

www.rpgregistry.com
www.playbyweb.com
http://thecorecollective.net/CORE/COREAboutus.htm
www.borederes.com/phpBore/
www.rpgworlds.com/index.php
http://Accessdenied.net
www.openhere.com/games/role-playing/online-communities (features links to other game sites as well)
www.roleplayinggames.net (for message board gaming)
www.dungeonmanager.com (primarily designed to store campaign and character information online, but open games can be found there as well)

http://boards.wizards.com—Wizards of the Coast message boards (go to RPG Gamer Classifieds)
www.rpgplanet.com (go to the Forums area)
www.fathomgate.com
www.macrayskeep.com
www.rpg.net
www.pbem.com (for play-by-email games)

NEWSGROUPS

Alt.games.adnd
Alt.games.adnd.forgotten-realms
Rec.games.frp.dnd
Rec.games.frp
Rec.games.frp.live-action
Rec.games.frp.misc

approach is more proactive than the one above, it can require considerable diplomacy to succeed. Basically, you're asking for admission into a gaming "club" when you inquire about openings, so your approach should be both diplomatic and informed. If you can show the DM that you've done some homework on the game, and that you can get along with the other players and make a solid contribution to the group, your chances of being admitted increase dramatically.

Whichever method you choose, don't be in too much of a hurry. Just as with face-to-face games, there are usually more players who want to join online games than there are DMs to run them. So be thoughtful and polite when making your contacts, be ready to sell yourself a little, and find a way to stand out in the crowd so that you'll seem like a promising addition to the group you want to join. Don't take it personally if you don't get into a game right away—perhaps the campaign you want is simply full. If that's the case, just ask to be put on the waiting list. Leave your contact information so that the DM can let you know when an opening arises, and it doesn't hurt to maintain occasional contact with the DM and players so that they don't forget you. Then move on and keep looking!

Players Wanted

Players seeking DMs tend to outnumber DMs seeking players by a wide margin. If you're a DM trying to put together a campaign, your challenge is not finding players, its finding the *right* players and keeping them. The good news is that you have a lot of control over how your game is played. When you run a game online, you're not stuck with players who happen to live in the neighborhood. You can choose from literally thousands of players, and it's a good bet that you'll find many who share your gaming philosophies and can appreciate your DMing style and campaign setting. To gain the maximum benefit from this large player pool, you should give some thought to the specifics of your game and what kinds of players you would like to have.

Your campaign checklist should include the following:

- What days and times can the game be played?
- What rules system and edition will be used?
- Will you use a premade campaign setting (such as the GHOSTWALK or FORGOTTEN REALMS), or one you've created from scratch?
- How experienced do you want your players to be? Will you accept new players, or do you want players who can quote the rules chapter and verse?
- What level of intensity do you want the game to have? Do you want it to be casual, or should it be one of the most important things in your players' lives?
- Will the game be played in live chat, by post, or will it use some combination of the two?
- How many players will you allow?

With face-to-face games, the schedules, experience, and preferences of the available participants tend to set these parameters for you. In an online game, however, you need to decide these issues in advance so that you'll attract players who understand and agree to the parameters you set. That way, it's much less likely that you'll attract players with unrealistic expectations who are likely to be disappointed.

Once you have the specifications figured out, you can go ahead and advertise. Post a summary of your campaign and your gaming approach to newsgroups, online clubs, and gaming forums, as well as some special game matchmaking sites. Don't forget to let potential players know how to reach you!

Once your announcement goes up, you should start receiving replies from interested players almost immediately. You'll have the luxury of sifting through the "applicants" and choosing the ones you think would best fit your campaign. Don't make it a power trip though; try to be professional about the selection. Choose the players you think are committed to playing and can contribute to the fun of the game for you and others. Go ahead and accept a couple more people than you think you can accommodate, because some are sure to drop out early in the process. Don't take it personally when they do; there are plenty of good reasons why people quit online games. Perhaps their schedules changed, they didn't like one or more of the other players, or they didn't like playing online. If you accept a couple of extra players up front, your game isn't in danger of falling apart when someone quits.

Even so, scheduling issues can be difficult to work out. It might take some time, and you might play only sporadically at first, but eventually, if you are persistent and your storyline is compelling, you'll be able to build an enduring campaign that persists as long as you want to play.

THE RING LEADER

When you run a game online, your players tend to look to you for all kinds of leadership—more so even than they would in a face-to-face game. This phenomenon occurs primarily because in the typical online campaign, none of the players know one another outside of the game. Thus, they tend to rely upon you to resolve player-to-player issues. They might also depend on you to confirm schedules, keep logs, and resolve whatever scheduling issues come up.

Don't be surprised if your players look to you for technical support as well. It's only natural—after all, you probably selected the programs you would use to run your game. Your players might not know the programs as well as you do. Be as helpful as you can, but if your players want to participate, it is ultimately their responsibility to ensure that they have the equipment and know-how to do so.

When you exercise your natural role as group leader, it's important that you lead firmly—more so than it would be in an ordinary roleplaying game. Correcting miscommunications is your responsibility, so accept it with grace. The Internet is a good communication medium, but it's far from perfect. Nuances such as expressions, tone, and body language that we take for

granted in face-to-face communications don't come through well at all via chat or email. Thus, a remark that's intended as a good-natured joke runs a higher-than-normal risk of offending someone. As the DM, it's up to you to mediate such mishaps. If you don't, they can tear the group apart.

You might also find it difficult to manage the sequence of actions in the game over the Internet. In a face-to-face game, you can encourage people to speak one at a time and in turn. In online games, players are much more likely to blurt things out to the screen whenever they wish because it doesn't look like they are interrupting one another. Add to that the fact that messages are sometimes delayed getting to screen because of bad connections, and your orderly combat sequence suddenly becomes a hodgepodge. You have to remain focused and disciplined to avoid being overwhelmed by the rush of messages that floods the screen when the party is caught in the open by an ogre ambush. The good news is that there's a written record of what everyone said and did right there on your screen, assuming that your program doesn't let it scroll off into oblivion. You can sort out everyone's actions and verify player claims just by scrolling up through the messages. If your program logs sessions, you can also save a record of the entire game and review it later at your leisure.

LET'S GET VISUAL

One of the biggest advantages that face-to-face gaming has over the online play is in the realm of visualization. Some players might be accustomed to relying on tactical battle maps and miniatures to display the situation so that they can choose their character's next actions. That option isn't as conveniently available online.

Several tools and techniques are available to help you address this deficiency, although some are rather clumsy. The lowest-tech solution is to become a more descriptive DM. Get into the habit of describing areas and features in greater detail than you normally would in a face-to-face game. When your players can't see anything except words on the screen, you have to literally paint a verbal picture for them. One way to reduce the burden this places on you is to type out detailed descriptions of key areas ahead of time and save them into computer files, so that when the time comes to use them, you can just copy and paste the information into the chat or email window. Even with the best description, however, your players will have questions, so try to be patient when they ask for clarifications.

You can supplement this descriptive technique by making basic maps of key areas and sending them to the players via email or posting them on a website. Several good mapping programs are available for download, and many of them are free. The Rolls Royce of mapping programs is called Campaign Cartographer (**www.profantasy.com**), which costs around $75. Fractal Mapper (**www.nbos.com/products/mapper/mapper.htm**) costs about $35. The best free programs include AutoRealm (**www.gryc.ws**), and DungeonCrafter v. 1.4.1 (**www.dungeoncrafter.com**). These programs can be tricky to use, but they get the job done, and their output can be exported into files that can be read by most of the "paint" programs included with Windows or Mac OS. Providing maps that the players can display and print out goes a long way toward helping them visualize the action, but it's still not a perfect solution because the players can't move miniatures or tokens around on the map for everyone to see.

If you absolutely, positively must have the battlemat experience, you have three options to choose from: d20Map (**groups.yahoo.com/group/d20map**), OpenRPG (**www.openrpg.com**), and WebRPG (**www.webrpg.com**). WebRPG offers limited functionality for free but charges a monthly fee of $9.95 for three months or $34.95 per year for full usage. OpenRPG and d20Map are free, but their interfaces are not quite as polished. Programs like these allow you to upload maps to websites and move markers around on them in real time. Such a simulation is probably the closest thing you can get online to an in-person, battlemat-type playing experience. The downside is that these programs are complex, so they require more powerful computers and more sophisticated users than the other options. If you're interested in utilizing one of these battlemat resources, your best bet is to download them yourself and play around with them to see how comfortable you are with the technology. You could even ask another DM who's using one of these platforms in an ongoing game to let you sit in and watch, so that you can see how it operates under real conditions.

IS ONLINE GAMING FOR YOU?

If the Internet is the only place you can find a game, then the answer is an emphatic yes! Even if you have other options available, you might find that online gaming offers new playing possibilities. It lets you choose your favorite rules system, campaign setting, and style of play, as well as fit game sessions into your schedule. In short, online gaming gives both players and DMs more opportunities to optimize their gaming experience.

To make online gaming as easy and as enjoyable as possible, it helps to have some computer skills, or at least a desire to learn them. The good news is that you have a lot of choices available, even if your tech skills are limited. You can choose the very lowest-tech option—the play-by-post game—or the highest-tech option—dynamic battlements alongside real-time chat—or anything in between.

The key to success in online gaming is patience. It might take a little time to find a game or start one, and you might have to try a few games before you settle on one that's right for you. So many games are available online, and so many more waiting to be started, that you're bound to find the right fit—it's only a matter of time.

Dungeoncraft

DUNGEON ADVENTURES, PART 4
THE WEIRD STUFF

by Monte Cook

So far, we've discussed the average and the typical dungeons—how to map and populate them, and how to make them dynamic and interesting. This month, let's look into some of the weirder types of dungeon environments and encounters.

CAVES

Although discussed a few issues ago as a type of "realistic" dungeon, a cave system can also be a very weird, alternative kind of dungeon. Caves are three-dimensional complexes, and not every surface and area is easily used by creatures. Caves rarely have uniform flat floors—ledges, steplike formations, slopes, and uneven floors are far more common. And since most caves are created by water, most caves are still very damp and slick. Balance checks are probably common in realistic caves—perhaps during every round of a battle fought on the uneven cave floors. (This can grow tiresome, but for one adventure, or part of an adventure, it can be an interesting diversion.) See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* pages 60 and 91 for slippery surface rules.

A large cavern that requires some climbing to cross is more interesting than a simple room you walk across. Inhabitants can take advantage of high-placed ledges from which to make ranged attacks, or trick intruders into sliding down a slope of loose rocks.

Stalactites, Stalagmites, and Columns: These are the most familiar cave formations. Stalactites hang downward from the cave ceiling, often resembling thin fangs. Stalagmites grow upward from the cave floor and are generally the results of mineral-rich deposits dripping from overhanging stalactites. Stalagmites are found only in older, drier caves, where water does not run through the cave system regularly.

A column forms when a stalactite and a stalagmite grow until they join. These can become massive, and the inside of a column makes an interesting place for a burrowing monster's lair.

Flowstone: Formed when sheets of calcite are deposited on the wall or floor by a very slow flowing action, flowstone can take on the eerie appearance of a large brain or even an ooze like a black pudding or ochre jelly. Flowstone is usually wet and glistening, often with dark colors.

Drapery: A curtain or drapery begins to form on an inclined ceiling, growing downward and hanging in decorative folds like a drape. These can be very thin (like actual drapes) or they might eventually become thick enough to serve as strange, wavy walls in a large cave.

Rimstone Dams: These raised, fencelike deposits of calcite on the cave floor form around pools of water and can take on a pot-like appearance. These are great spots for hidden treasure or concealing a monster lying in wait to ambush unsuspecting explorers.

Spar: Looking like a mass of exposed crystals jaggedly protruding from the wall, spar is actually composed of deposits of calcite or gypsum, or sometimes barite, halite, or quartz. These jagged formations appear dangerous yet interesting due to their facets and colors. They frequently "grow" in pools, sometimes jutting up and out of the water.

Fill, Talus, or Scree: Varying from sand and clay bits to stratified gravel, the pebbles in these deposits are often highly polished and glisten like jewels (but they are not worth anything). Rock material produced by the collapse of the ceiling or walls of a cave is called breakdown and might range in size from plates and chips to massive blocks. Cave floors are not typically smooth, flat, or clean. Walking around in a cave can be very treacherous.

RUINS

While a ruined castle with dungeons underneath is the archetypal dungeon, ruins of other places can also make unique "dungeon" experiences.

Mines: Perhaps the most straightforward dungeon ruin is the mine, because mines already seem like dungeons. Don't forget to include interesting mine accoutrements such as ore carts, scattered tools, shafts with scaffolding and elevator-like platforms on pulleys, and the chance to find valuable ore while exploring.

Foundry: This is a huge building or complex of buildings (or underground chambers) filled with all sorts of forges, vats to contain molten metal, troughs at different angles and heights to guide molten metal down into molds, and so on. If it's a magical foundry, during some crucial encounter the fires could rekindle and turn the whole place into a very dangerous maze.

Pyramid: While exploring an ancient tomb is an obvious dungeon adventure, putting the tomb inside a huge pyramid can add flavor to an old idea. Alternatively, the pyramid could be something entirely different than a tomb (such as a residence, a vault, a fortress, or a magical energy collector), and the PCs must contend with the slanted walls and the challenges required in reaching the important chamber at the top or in the heart of the pyramid.

Coliseum: A ruined coliseum is an interesting complex that often includes armories, cages, training rooms, and other chambers in addition to the arena and seating. Haunted by dead gladiators, and possibly even inhabited by creatures once forced to fight in the arena (or their descendants), you can populate this dungeon with interesting foes. If the whole adventure climaxes in a big fight in the arena itself, all the better.

A Whole City: Exploring an entire ruined city can seem like exploring a dungeon, with streets serving as hallways and buildings as rooms. You can handle the whole adventure in the same way. Alternatively, you can make it clear to the PCs, after they've searched a bit, that most buildings contain nothing of value (and thus the buildings become more like walls rather than rooms in the "dungeon"), and only special encounter areas in the city—in special buildings, in the town square, and so on—are the "rooms" of the dungeon.

WATER

You can do so many cool things with water in a dungeon that it's worthy of its own section here. Plus, any of these settings are a great excuse to use the cool aquatic monsters in D&D, such as aboleths, kuo-toa, sahuagin, and so on.

Submerged Secret: Some important part of the dungeon lies underwater. Perhaps this is as simple as a key at the bottom of a pool. Much better, however, is a submerged tunnel at the bottom of a pool that leads to a hidden vault (which might or might not be submerged itself).

In theory, a whole section of the dungeon—or the entire dungeon—might be underwater, with water-filled passages and chambers. The PCs must figure out a way to bypass or travel through the water to navigate the chambers.

Dungeon Beneath the Waves: The whole dungeon complex lies below the surface of a lake or sea, although the dungeon itself might (or might not) be air-filled. Commonly, this kind of dungeon might be a sealed underwater castle, a lost city under a dome, or a sunken ship. It could be the lair of tritons, skum, or locathah, but it could also be the hidden base of air-breathing creatures that have some means to reach it from the surface—magic, a submersible craft, or a passage under the sea floor.

The Partially Flooded Dungeon: The dungeon, or parts of the dungeon, are filled with water, but not entirely submerged. Explorers either need a boat to get around, or they need to fly or swim. Parts of the dungeon might be completely flooded and require going underwater, and other areas might be completely dry (but connected only by the water-filled areas). The dungeon might have been built this way by amphibious creatures, or it might have been intended for something entirely different, but it has been flooded due to the breaking of a dam, a diverted river, or a powerful spell.

Water-Filled Shaft: The whole dungeon is dry except for a central shaft that provides access to all the different levels. Water in the shaft allows swimmers or those in special submersibles to rise or descend. Each level has an airlock connecting it to the shaft.

EXTRADIMENSIONAL

With the ability to use magic to bend and expand space, or travel to different locations, dungeons do

OFF-BEAT DUNGEON CONCEPTS

The DM might want to consider one of the following four alternative approaches when designing a dungeon. Each dictates, to some degree, the entire dungeon's design. This is by no means a complete list.

1. **Search the Whole Place.** This kind of dungeon is designed so that the PCs can't breeze through—they've got to search every room to find the right keys or levers, or whatever item will allow them to pass to the next room. This almost always entails the PCs looking for multiple things (or else they'll stop looking when they find the one objective), and often they must find one thing to find the next, and so on.

2. **We Can See It From Here.** Taking the idea of the force maze and broadening it, the PCs early on can see something they need or think they need, but can't reach it, don't know how to use it, or don't know that they need it. It might be a treasure behind an invisible barrier, a door on the other side of a river of lava, or a high floating platform that the PCs cannot reach.

3. **Not the Same the Second Time Through.** The PCs go through the dungeon, do something (kill the enemy sorcerer, steal the magic emerald, and so forth), but find when they try to make their way out that their actions have changed everything. Now the dungeon is flooded, rearranged, or filled with all new inhabitants (or the old ones have a new agenda or outlook).

4. **Getting In is Easy.** Sometimes the PCs' goal is to simply escape from the dungeon, having been dumped into it via a trap door, or reached it via an underground river on a boat, which has now sunk.

not have to be simply straightforward complexes of rooms and corridors.

Gates Rather Than Doors: Create a dungeon with no doors, where magic gates take the inhabitants and the PCs from room to room instead. This renders *passwall* and *clairvoyance* useless when the PCs try to "make their own way through" the dungeon. Take this idea a step further, and you can have one encounter area in an ice cave in the frozen north and another in the heart of volcano, or one room in the Abyss and another in Limbo.

Extradimensional Twists: Craft a dungeon that is far larger on the inside than the outside. The hallways twist and turn onto themselves, rooms expand beyond the dimensions that they could possibly stretch, and so on. This makes mapping for explorers extremely hard (perhaps impossible), but it also makes mapping tricky for the DM.

METHOD TO THE MADNESS

Many interesting dungeons have a trick, such as a series of magical keys required to pass through all the doors. Here are a few other ideas:

Keys: It is a simple matter to lock various doors in the dungeon and then place the keys in other parts of the dungeon, encouraging the PCs to explore the whole place to find what they need.

Careful dungeon design involves placing the keys in areas accessible to the PCs in an interesting sequence. If they are in area A, they might find keys allowing access to area B and C, but it is only within area B that they find the key to area D.

Keys don't have to look or work like keys. They might be magical gems, weapons, or creatures. The doors they open might be only unlocked by the keys (the doors are in other ways virtually indestructible), or they might simply be dangerous if opened without them. They might not even appear to be doors, but statues that move out of the way to expose passageways or magical teleporters.

Levers: Another classic, this dungeon has doors that open only after certain (usually hidden) levers are pulled. Often, the levers trigger other things, such as activating or deactivating traps, summoning monsters, and so on. The lever system can get quite complicated, so that some doors open only when a certain lever is up, but others only when the same lever is down.

As with keys, the levers do not need to be actual levers. Actuating a lever might mean turning the head of a statue, completing a magical circuit, or even destroying a magical device or creature. A lever might even be in a hidden compartment inside an iron golem.

Passwords: Passwords work just like keys, except that instead of finding the key, you have to learn or figure out the password. Passwords can be magical words that open doors (such as the classic "Open sesame" or "Speak 'friend,' and enter") or can be more mundane passwords you must speak to a guard or magical guardian. Passwords can be the answers to riddles or something the PCs can only discover by gathering information or speaking diplomatically with just the right people or creatures.

Actions: Actions can work like keys or like levers, as described above. In such a dungeon, a PC must move the pieces of a magical puzzle lock in the right configuration, cast the right spell, slay the right beast, or gain the proper tattoo in order to get through a barrier. The action can also be a diplomatic one—the PCs have to convince the brass dragon to let them pass or the guard behind the door to open it.

MISCELLANEOUS IDEAS

Here are a few more atypical dungeon ideas.

Random Teleporters: The dungeon is filled with random teleporters—spots which, if entered, teleport the character to a random place in the dungeon. These spots could have been created as intentional traps, or perhaps they resulted from magic gone awry. They might or might not have some sort of key (physical, verbal, or mental) that allows characters to bypass them or direct the teleportation effects in a nonrandom way.

Force Maze: A maze in the dungeon features walls that are all invisible *walls of force*. Thus, the characters exploring the maze can see all the way through it—perhaps even spotting monsters, other characters, treasure in the maze, or the way out—but they still must navigate it. Of course, finding one's way through a maze of invisible walls can be extremely tricky unless *disintegrate* spells are plentiful.

Curiosity Rooms: In the dungeon, create a room with half-buried corpses, some even embedded in the wall, as the result of some terrible magical accident or perhaps a long-forgotten spell. Or add a long hallway full of paintings, some of which are of places the PCs can identify. Consider adding a chamber filled with gambling tables and games of chance—either long forgotten or still used by the inhabitants. These encounters are not dangerous and don't advance the story, but they can be interesting for the PCs to investigate like detectives.

Intelligent Door: A powerful magic door stands in the PCs' way. They can't batter through it and there is no key. They have to convince it to let them through, perhaps by performing a service for it.

Platform Dungeon: Most of the dungeon lies in one large chamber with suspended walkways and platforms rather than halls and rooms. Similar to the force maze, the PCs can see what lies ahead and simply have to figure out the best way to get there. Unlike the force maze, a *fly* spell can allow the PCs to circumvent the adventure.

Alternatively, the platforms can be suspended from trees outside, or above a bubbling volcano, or stretching through a strange otherplanar environment that has no ground.

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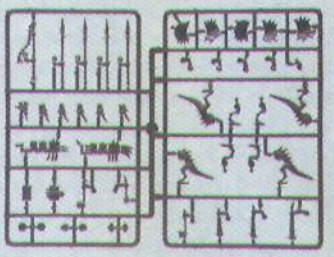

AFTER

Assembly and painting required.
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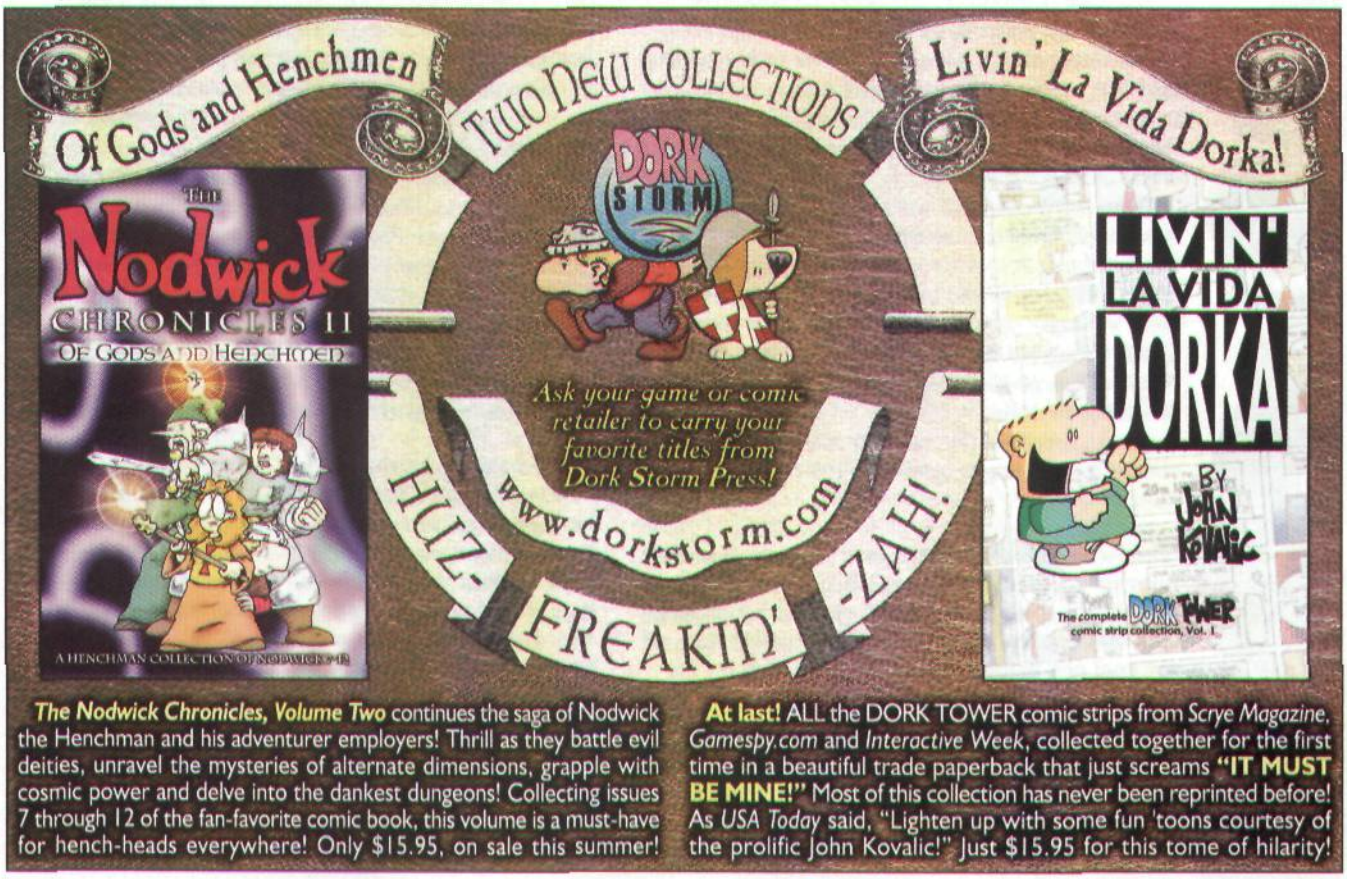
Paizo Publishing LLC and Games Workshop Ltd. have teamed up to bring *UNDEFEATED* magazine's charter subscribers something special. For a limited time, U.S. and Canadian customers will get a free plastic sprue (pronounced "sprew") of four Lizardmen Saurus Warriors with their paid subscription.

Don't let the pretty picture fool you. Not only do these guys require painting, they also come in pieces. The good news is, there are three different ways you can assemble these Saurus Warriors: with sword and shield, spear, or with standards or war drums. If you're not sure how to assemble and paint these guys, go to **www.gamesworkshop.com/hobby** to look for more expert advice.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Sage Advice

3.5 ISSUES OFFICIAL ANSWERS

by Skip Williams

This month, the Sage begins by reconsidering some old advice, then moves on to examine diverse topics from spells to skills to repeating crossbows. You can email the Sage with your questions at tsrsage@aol.com.

Back in issue #308 you suggested that a sorcerer could make use of the Heighten Spell and Improved Counterspell feats to counter just about any spell. A sorcerer couldn't use any spell modified by metamagic as a counterspell, could he? A sorcerer needs a full-round action to cast such a spell, and you couldn't prepare such an action, could you?

The Sage didn't do his homework on that question and you caught him. A sorcerer needs at least a full-round action to cast any spell modified with a metamagic feat, and that makes the spell useless for counterspelling. As you point out, you can't ready a full-round action and you must ready a counterspell ahead of time.

There are a couple of ways a sorcerer can work around this problem. The Spell Preparation feat from the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* and *Tome and Blood* let sorcerers and bards prepare spells and cast them with their normal casting time, even with metamagic feats applied. The Reactive Counterspell feat from *Magic of Faerûn* allows you to counter a spell without preparing an action. A sorcerer or bard using this feat could use Improved Counterspell and Heighten Spell to counter a spell, but would need a full-round action to do so.

While we're on the subject, just when do so-called full-round actions take place? Does a sorcerer's heightened spell (or any other spell with a metamagic feat applied) go off on the sorcerer's turn, or not until just before the sorcerer's action on the following turn? What about other full-round actions? The coup de grace has generated a lot of problems in our campaign. When is this action finished? If it's not over until just before the attacker's next action, can the target's friends save her, perhaps by getting in the way or dragging her out of reach?

Any full-round action takes place entirely during the acting character's turn. That is, the action begins and ends during the acting character's turn in the initiative order. Although taking a full-round action leaves you no time to move (except, possibly, a 5-foot step) it does not continue into the next round in the same way a spell with a casting time of 1 round does. A full-round action is quicker than a 1-round casting time.

Delivering a coup de grace requires a full-round action, not 1 round. The coup de grace is delivered during the attacker's turn, and there's not much the target's allies can do about it except to drag the target out of reach before the attacker can act (this requires the allies to act before the attacker does during the current round), or fell the attacker with the attacks of opportunity that are triggered when the attacker attempts the coup de grace (this requires the allies to be in position to threaten the attacker). Since attacks of opportunity are resolved before the action that triggers them, they can prevent a coup de grace if they drop the attacker. Also, a helpless character's allies could ready an action to attack anyone that tries to hurt the helpless ally, but since doing so requires the ready action, they're usually better off dragging their helpless ally to a place of safety.

The description for the *glove of storing* in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* ends with two sentences that have given me some trouble. The first says spell durations on items stored in the glove "continue to expire." What does that mean? Suppose I'm a 3rd-level wizard and I cast a *magic weapon* spell on a sword, then store the sword in the glove. Two weeks later, I retrieve the weapon from the glove. Is the weapon still under the effect of the spell, or has the spell long since expired? The final sentence is even more puzzling. It says that when an effect is suppressed or dispelled, the stored item reappears

Borders illustrated by David Wahlstrom

instantly. What does that mean? The stored item reappears when what effect is suppressed or dispelled? What happens if I've got my hands full when the stored item reappears?

Although an item stored in a *glove of storing* is held in stasis, that stasis does not apply to any spells or other magical effects placed on the stored item. The spell or effect's duration continues to run as normal and it expires at the normal time. The 3rd-level wizard in your example casts a *magic weapon* spell that lasts 3 minutes. This duration is not extended if someone puts the weapon that has received the spell into the glove, even though the weapon is otherwise held in stasis. When you pull the weapon out of the glove after two weeks, the *magic weapon* spell effect is long gone.

> Delivering a coup de grace requires a full-round action, not 1 round.

The final sentence in the item description refers to the glove itself. If the glove's magic is dispelled or suppressed, any item stored in the glove pops out. In your example, if *dispel magic* is used against the glove, the sword stored in the glove pops out if the spell succeeds. Because the glove is a permanent magic item, the dispel effect is only temporary (see the *dispel magic* spell description), and you can place the item back in the glove when it recovers from the effect. The same effect would occur if you take the glove into an *antimagic field.*

Most magical storage items use extradimensional space (such as a *bag of holding*). When the magic on such an item is dispelled or suppressed, access to the item's interior is closed off and you cannot deposit or retrieve anything in the magical storage item until the suppression ends. A *glove of storing* works differently. When its magic is dispelled or suppressed, an item stored inside pops out into your hand, just as if you recalled the item yourself. If you're already holding an item in that hand, you must either drop the stored item as it reappears or drop the item you're holding so you can hold the stored item. In some cases, your DM may decide you can hold both items at the same time, in which case you don't have to drop anything.

I know the spell description for *scrying* says the spell creates a magical sensor located near the subject. I'm wondering if the spell is able to scry on locations or items as well as creatures? If it is not able to scry on a location or item, is it able to at least look around the creature's location and see what the location looks like? I mean, to me, it sounds like you cast the spell and all you see is the creature. That's not terribly useful for someone trying to find a kidnapping victim. Is there any way to look at an area remotely?

The subject of the *scrying* spell must be a creature. You can study a location (not a specific creature or object) with the *clairaudience/clairvoyance* spell. In the latter case, you must specify the location. In the case of *scrying*, you need only specify the subject creature.

When the *scrying* spell shows you a creature, however, you also see the area around the creature, to a distance of about 10 feet (see the paragraph immediately after the saving throw table in the spell description). In game terms, you see the creature and everything within 10 feet of the creature (the bigger the creature the more area you see). This might allow you to see other creatures or features near your subject.

How does the Disable Device skill work? Say my rogue has spotted what looks like a trap—for example, a pressure plate. How does he go about disabling it? How can you disable a trap if you don't know what it does? Or is figuring out the trap part of disabling it?

In play, Disable Device works just like any other skill: You make a skill check, and you succeed if your check result meets or exceeds the check DC; if you fail badly when attempting to disable a trap, you might trigger the trap (see the Disable Device skill description in the *Player's Handbook*).

The DM is free to decide exactly how much information you get about a trap you're trying to disable. In most cases, you'll discover just enough about the trap's workings to disable it. In the case of the pressure plate in your example, you'll discover that the plate triggers a reaction of some type if depressed, and a successful Disable Device check allows you to somehow jam the plate so that it cannot be depressed or it is otherwise rendered nonfunctional. It's best to assume that a successful Disable Device check cripples the trap in the simplest and most straightforward way possible. With a pressure plate, that probably means using some kind of wedge to keep the plate from moving. It is certainly possible to disarm a trap in this manner without ever figuring out exactly what the trap does.

A Disable Device check does reveal a trap's workings if the check beats the Disable Device DC by 10 or more. Even so, you might not completely understand the trap's workings, but you'll know what kind of nastiness the trap can dish out and exactly where the trap dishes it out. That knowledge can allow you to bypass the trap without triggering it.

Let's say a character encounters a trap and sets it off without being aware of the trap ahead of time. Now let's say you are the DM and you roll to see if the trap hits, but it fails. If a trap is triggered it cannot

miss (unless it was broken or didn't work); it has to be dodged. What are you supposed to tell the player if you are the DM? You cannot just say, "You jump out of the way," because you can't control the PC's actions. How would you solve this dilemma? What should you tell the player?

First, some traps certainly can miss; that's why they're assigned attack values. Perhaps the trap's mechanism doesn't work all that consistently, or perhaps the trap actually tracks and attacks its targets the way a creature would. Any trap that can't miss and has to be dodged should use a Reflex save, not an attack roll.

In any case, you, as the DM, have three choices.

Tell the player the trap missed the character. It is not necessary to elaborate.

Tell the player the character dodged the trap. It's perfectly okay to assume small, involuntary actions on the part of a character, especially when they work to the character's benefit. You do indeed want to avoid dictating any character action that the player normally would think about before actually deciding to do it. For example, it's bad to inform a player that her character has just opened a door or picked up an object—your job as the DM is to explain that the door or object is there and then get on with the game once the player decides what to do about it. On the other hand, it's just to dictate any purely reflex action that might occur as a result of the player's decision. Let's say a character walks past a door without giving it a second glance. If the door bursts open thereafter, it's fine to tell the player that the sudden event startles the character and sends a shiver through her body. The effect is harmless and is simply added as part of the game's narrative. Likewise, if a character picks up an object that turns out to be searing hot, it's okay to inform the player that the character has dropped the object. In this latter case, the player might legitimately object. If so, you can allow the character a check or save (perhaps a Concentration check) to hold onto the item.

Finally, you could simply tell the player nothing. Perhaps the character didn't notice the trap at all; however, a Spot or Listen check might be in order just to determine if the character noticed something amiss.

How would you solve this dilemma? What should you tell the player?

The equipment section in the *Player's Handbook* says hemp rope can be burst with a successful DC 23 Strength check. Does this mean that a bound character, no matter how cleverly tied up, can simply escape by making a DC 23 Strength check? A character with a Strength score of at least 16 (+3 bonus) could do that automatically by "taking 20" on the check.

The DC to burst a single strand of rope is 23. If one is tied up, one is dealing with multiple strands of rope and not in the best position to exert leverage. Although the rope's ability to resist breakage would be a factor if someone were trying to break bonds, the skill with which the character was bound is more important.

A quick look at the Escape Artist skill description shows that escaping from bonds requires an Escape Artist check opposing the Use Rope check from whoever tied up the prisoner, and the character that tied the bonds gets a +10 bonus. If the prisoner just tries to break out through sheer Strength, add the break DC for rope (23) to the Use Rope check instead of +10.

If you use this method, it's possible (although not likely) for a truly inept captor to tie bonds that have a break DC of less than 23. That's somewhat realistic, because any knot, especially when badly tied, can weaken a rope.

Exactly when do you make your save against a *blade barrier* spell? Suppose you have already moved in the round and someone casts a *blade barrier* spell on you. You are supposed to move out of the area in the most direct path to avoid damage from the spell. Since you've already moved, do you even get a save against the spell? If you make your save and cannot move yet, do you take damage from the spell anyway? Or do you get to move again? Or do you wait until it's your turn and then make the save?

You make the save when the spell hits you. If you succeed, you take no damage from the spell, and you wind up on one side of the barrier or the other (under the current rules, the barrier must be vertical). Upon making a successful save, you choose which side of the barrier you end up on. If movement is necessary to place you on that side, you immediately move to that side along the shortest possible path, even if you've already moved that round. For Medium creatures, such movement will be fairly minor (usually 5 feet). In the case of very big creatures, the DM might want to limit the creature to the side that requires the least movement. If it's not possible for you to move, or not possible to move to a safe side, you're stuck in the barrier and you take damage.

How many times in a day may a priest have his or her spells replenished? I have a player who cites the *Player's Handbook* as saying that the priest need only meditate for 1 hour to regain his spells. Please shed some light on this if you can.

A cleric (or other divine spellcaster) regains spells once a day. This requires 1 hour of meditation at the correct time of day (which can vary depending on the character and his deity). See Preparing Divine Spells in Chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Is it possible to fire a repeating crossbow with one hand, shooting it like a modern semiautomatic pistol? A friend of mine says you only need one hand to fully operate a repeating crossbow, and that you could hold a repeating crossbow in each hand, firing both of them in the same round. I argued that repeating crossbows didn't work like that. Real-life repeaters were lever-action jobs invented by the Chinese. You pull back the lever with one hand while holding the crossbow with the other. The lever drew the string back and dropped another round in from the magazine. So it required two hands to operate. My friend countered that the repeating crossbow presented in the *Player's Handbook* was not based on the real weapon and instead worked on a clockwork principal with a crank-wound spring pulling back the string after each shot. Besides the fact that the idea is preposterous (the force required to cock a crossbow is powerful indeed). Such a device would require a massive and heavy spring which would be almost impossible to wind or it would be far too weak to be effective (not to mention being heavy as heck). The description in the *Player's Handbook* does not mention any kind of spring wind system. Therefore, it must be assumed that the weapon works just like its real-life counterpart. So what is it? Is it a semiautomatic completely one-handed weapon? Or is it a simple, realistic two-handed lever-operated device? And if it is a spring-wound weapon, how many shots can it fire between windings, and how long does it take to wind?

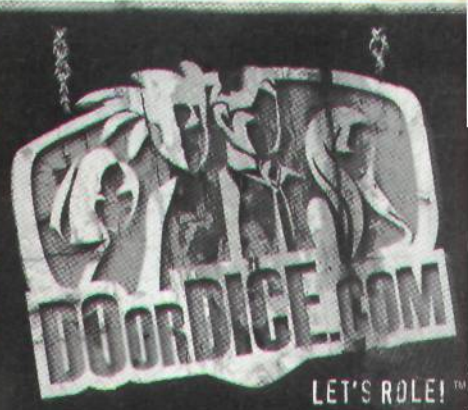
Ah, the joys of rules debates!

Anyone can try to shoot a heavy or light crossbow with one hand as noted in the heavy and light crossbow entries in Chapter 7 of the *Player's Handbook*. As these entries point out, however, one-handed reloading is not possible.

You're right about the repeating crossbow. (So is your friend, up to a point. The game's repeating crossbow works a lot better than the Chinese original did.) The weapon has a lever (and the lever is shown in the picture of the weapon in the *Player's Handbook*), but it's a cocking/reloading lever, not a windup lever for a clockwork mechanism. Your friend ought to read the description of the weapon: You reload the crossbow by pulling the lever after each shot, and that takes two hands, also as noted in the weapon description.

When grappling, the order of events is: starting the grapple (the "grab"), then grappling, then pinning, right? How many of these can you do in a round? Can you, in one attack, go all the way to pinned or is it based on the number of attacks you have?

It's the latter. You can grab someone and establish a hold with one attack, but pinning an opponent is an option only when you're able to make an attack and you already



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have a foe in your grasp (see If You're Grappling in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*). To grab and pin someone in one turn, you have to have at least two attacks available that turn.

Can you always use Escape Artist instead of a Strength check when you're grappling, or is this only for escaping a grapple?

You don't make a Strength check when grappling, you make a grapple check, which is like a melee attack roll modified by size, when appropriate. (See Grapple Checks in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*).

If a foe has grappled or pinned you, you can make an Escape Artist check to escape the grapple or break the pin. You cannot use an Escape Artist check for anything other than escape. That is, you can't use an Escape Artist check to establish a hold, damage your opponent, draw a light weapon, move, establish a pin, use the opponent's weapon, or even to oppose your foe's grapple check when the foe is trying to do any of those things to you.

If a creature with reach, such as an assassin vine, grapples you, it then pulls you into its space. Does this move happen all at once or is there a limit to how far you are pulled in a round?

When an attacker grapples, it is the attacker who must move into the defender's space, not the other way around. If you can reach a foe and you manage to establish a hold, you move into the foe's space as part of the grapple attack; this movement is free and doesn't count against your movement for the turn (see Starting a Grapple in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*).

A monster with the Improved Grab special attack, such as an assassin vine, pulls the foe into it's own space rather than moving into the foe's space (see the Improved Grab entry in the *Monster Manual* glossary). This is also part of the attack and does not count as part of the attacker's or defender's movement.

If a creature has 0 reach, it must enter an enemy's square to attack that enemy, correct? If the creature enters the enemy's square, does it now threaten the enemy? Is it possible for the creature to flank the enemy? If so, where would an ally need to be positioned in order to flank the enemy?

If you're armed and you're in a position to make a melee attack against a foe, you threaten that foe (see Threatened Squares under the Attacks of Opportunity section in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*). To be armed you must wield a weapon or have natural weaponry. If your reach is 0, you can only threaten foes in the same square with you.

A creature with a reach of 0 cannot flank an opponent (see Flanking in Chapter 8 of the Player's Handbook). Such a creature cannot gain a flanking bonus from an ally nor grant a flanking bonus to an ally, not even when two or more of them enter the same foe's square and attack. D

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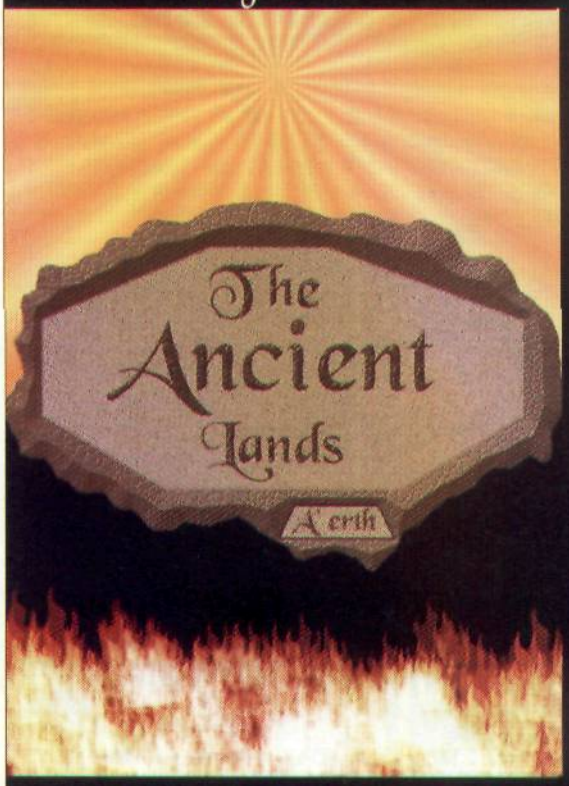

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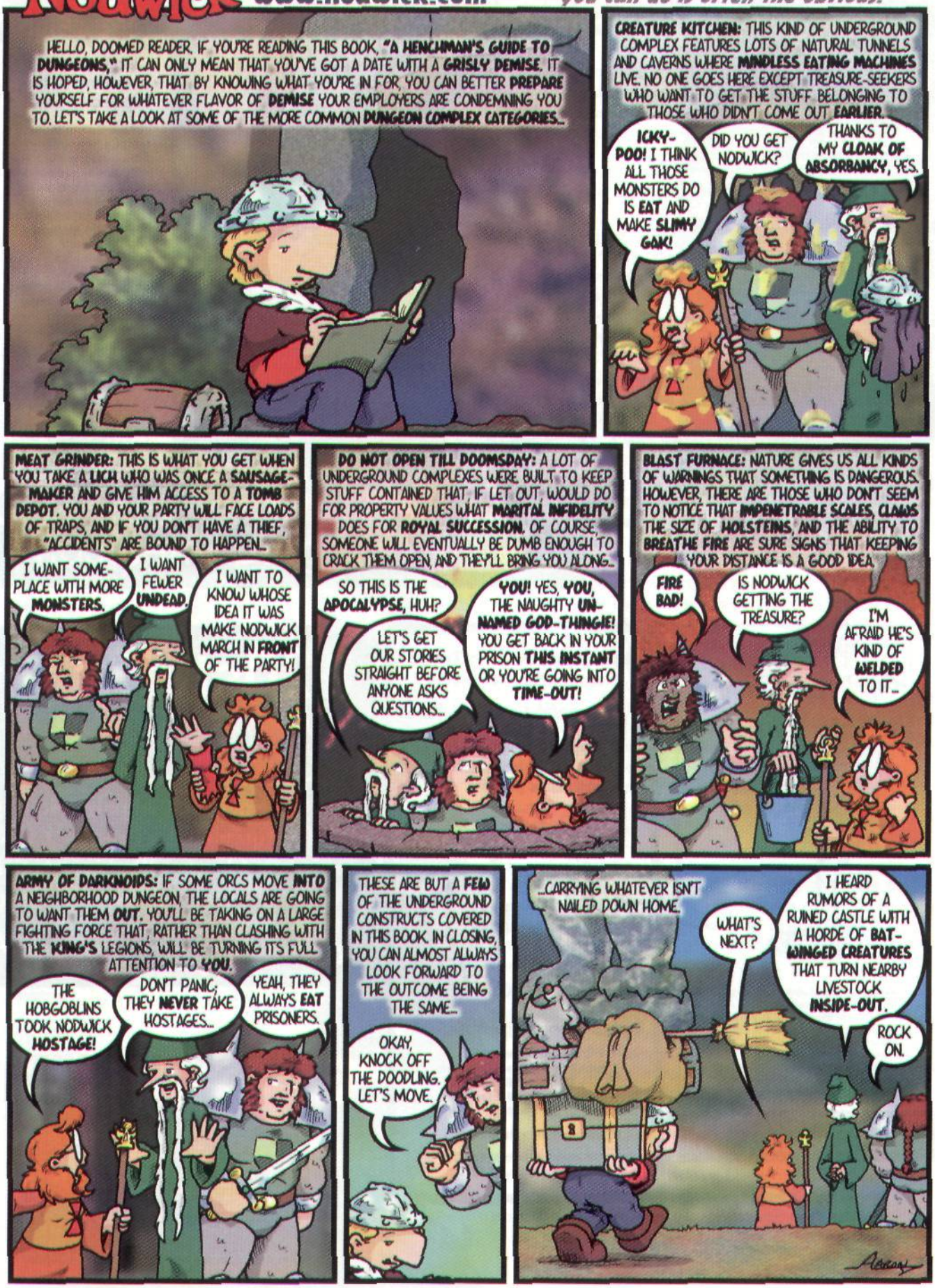
HELLO, DOOMED READER. IF YOU'RE READING THIS BOOK, "A HENCHMAN'S GUIDE TO DUNGEONS," IT CAN ONLY MEAN THAT YOU'VE GOT A DATE WITH A GRISLY DEMISE. IT IS HOPED, HOWEVER, THAT BY KNOWING WHAT YOU'RE IN FOR, YOU CAN BETTER PREPARE YOURSELF FOR WHATEVER FLAVOR OF DEMISE YOUR EMPLOYERS ARE CONDEMNING YOU TO. LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE MORE COMMON DUNGEON COMPLEX CATEGORIES...
CREATURE KITCHEN: THIS KIND OF UNDERGROUND COMPLEX FEATURES LOTS OF NATURAL TUNNELS AND CAVERNS WHERE MINDLESS EATING MACHINES LIVE. NO ONE GOES HERE EXCEPT TREASURE-SEEKERS WHO WANT TO GET THE STUFF BELONGING TO THOSE WHO DIDN'T COME OUT EARLIER.
ICKY-POO! I THINK ALL THOSE MONSTERS DO IS EAT AND MAKE SLIMY GAK!
DID YOU GET NODWICK?
THANKS TO MY CLOAK OF ABSORBANCY, YES.
MEAT GRINDER: THIS IS WHAT YOU GET WHEN YOU TAKE A LICH WHO WAS ONCE A SAUSAGE-MAKER AND GIVE HIM ACCESS TO A TOMB DEPOT. YOU AND YOUR PARTY WILL FACE LOADS OF TRAPS, AND IF YOU DON'T HAVE A THIEF, "ACCIDENTS" ARE BOUND TO HAPPEN...
I WANT SOME-PLACE WITH MORE MONSTERS.
I WANT FEWER UNDEAD.
I WANT TO KNOW WHOSE IDEA IT WAS MAKE NODWICK MARCH IN FRONT OF THE PARTY!
DO NOT OPEN TILL DOOMSDAY: A LOT OF UNDERGROUND COMPLEXES WERE BUILT TO KEEP STUFF CONTAINED THAT, IF LET OUT, WOULD DO FOR PROPERTY VALUES WHAT MARITAL INFIDELITY DOES FOR ROYAL SUCCESSION. OF COURSE, SOMEONE WILL EVENTUALLY BE DUMB ENOUGH TO CRACK THEM OPEN, AND THEY'LL BRING YOU ALONG...
SO THIS IS THE APOCALYPSE, HUH?
LET'S GET OUR STORIES STRAIGHT BEFORE ANYONE ASKS QUESTIONS...
YOU! YES, YOU, THE NAUGHTY UN-NAMED GOD-THINGIE! YOU GET BACK IN YOUR PRISON THIS INSTANT OR YOU'RE GOING INTO TIME-OUT!
BLAST FURNACE: NATURE GIVES US ALL KINDS OF WARNINGS THAT SOMETHING IS DANGEROUS. HOWEVER, THERE ARE THOSE WHO DON'T SEEM TO NOTICE THAT IMPENETRABLE SCALES, CLAWS THE SIZE OF HOLSTEINS, AND THE ABILITY TO BREATHE FIRE ARE SURE SIGNS THAT KEEPING YOUR DISTANCE IS A GOOD IDEA.
FIRE BAD!
IS NODWICK GETTING THE TREASURE?
I'M AFRAID HE'S KIND OF WELDED TO IT...
ARMY OF DARKNOIDS: IF SOME ORCS MOVE INTO A NEIGHBORHOOD DUNGEON, THE LOCALS ARE GOING TO WANT THEM OUT. YOU'LL BE TAKING ON A LARGE FIGHTING FORCE THAT, RATHER THAN CLASHING WITH THE KING'S LEGIONS, WILL BE TURNING ITS FULL ATTENTION TO YOU.
THE HOBGOBLINS TOOK NODWICK HOSTAGE!
DON'T PANIC; THEY NEVER TAKE HOSTAGES...
YEAH, THEY ALWAYS EAT PRISONERS.
THESE ARE BUT A FEW OF THE UNDERGROUND CONSTRUCTS COVERED IN THIS BOOK. IN CLOSING, YOU CAN ALMOST ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD TO THE OUTCOME BEING THE SAME...
OKAY, KNOCK OFF THE DOODLING. LET'S MOVE.
...CARRYING WHATEVER ISN'T NAILED DOWN HOME.
WHAT'S NEXT?
I HEARD RUMORS OF A RUINED CASTLE WITH A HORDE OF BAT-WINGED CREATURES THAT TURN NEARBY LIVESTOCK INSIDE-OUT.
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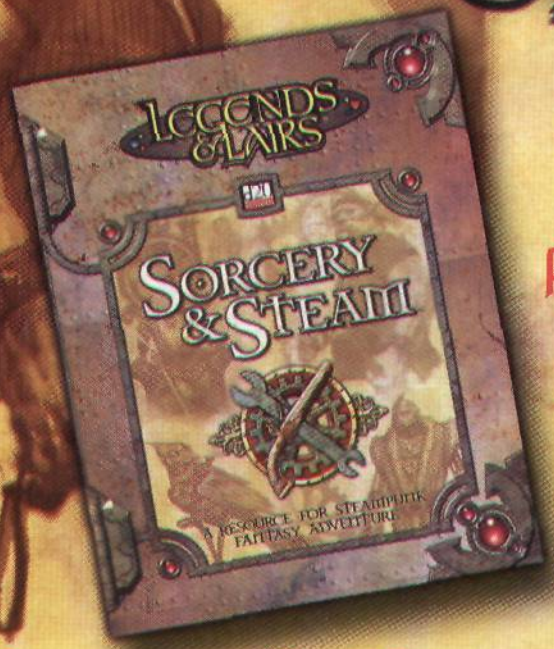

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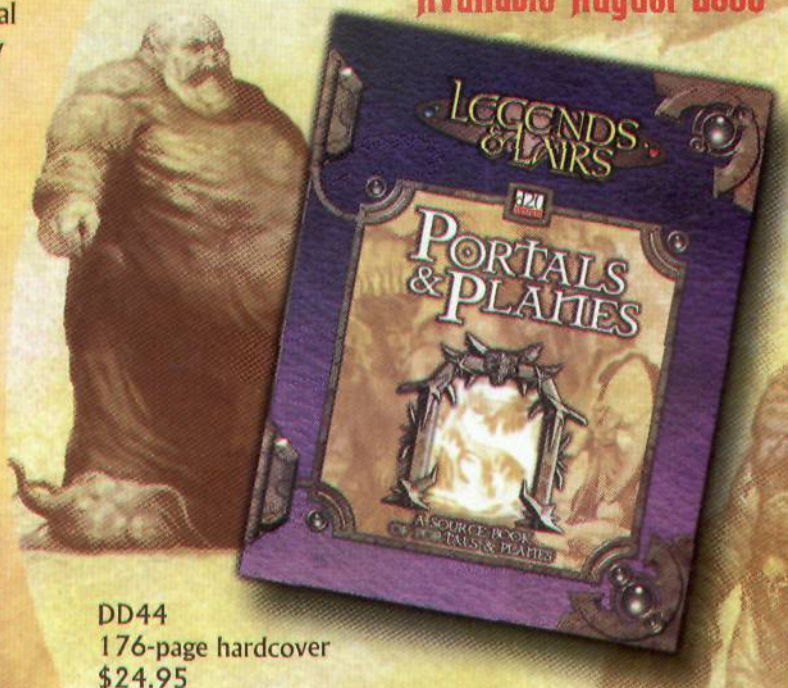

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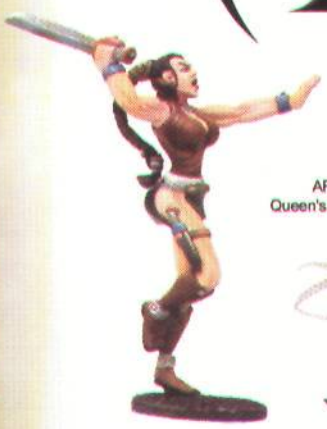

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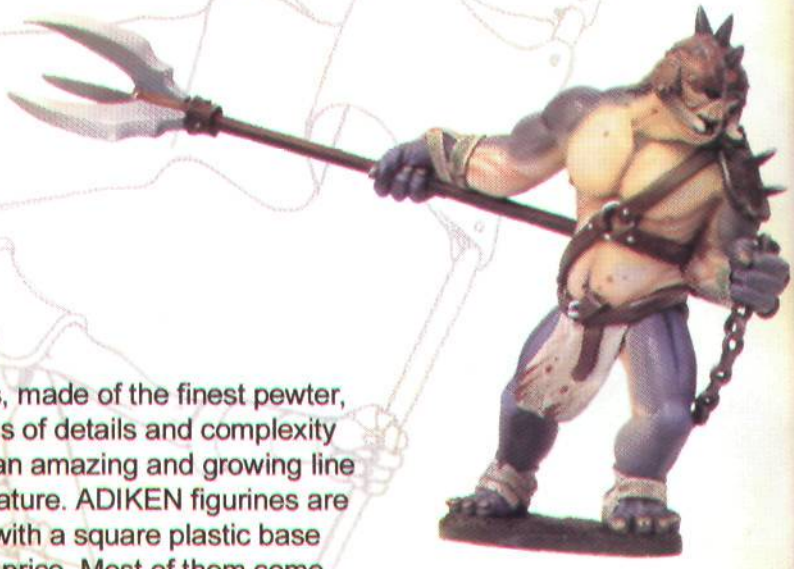

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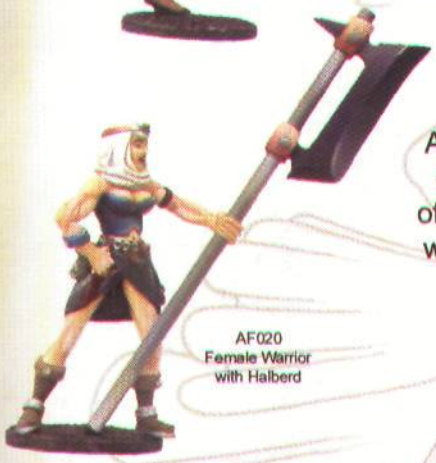

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